SECRET SOCIETIES AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

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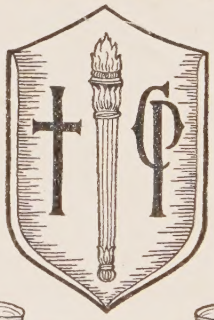

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SECRET SOCIETIES AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

By the Same Author

ANNA VAN SCHURMAN

ARTIST : SCHOLAR : SAINT

MAXIMS OF A QUEEN

ETC. ETC.

SECRET SOCIETIES
AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION
TOGETHER WITH SOME KINDRED STUDIES BY UNA BIRCH

LONDON : JOHN LANE, THE BODLEY HEAD
NEW YORK : JOHN LANE COMPANY : MCMXI

43741
SEP 2 8 1942
J. R. Lunt
DC
135.8
P7

THE BALLANTYNE PRESS TAVISTOCK STREET COVENT GARDEN LONDON

I have to thank the proprietors and editors of the *Edinburgh Review* and *The Nineteenth Century and After* for permission to republish these essays

UNA BIRCH

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SECRET SOCIETIES AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

"The appalling thing in the French Revolution is not the tumult, but the design. Through all the fire and smoke we perceive the evidence of calculating organisation. The managers remain studiously concealed and masked; but there is no doubt about their presence from the first."

Lord Acton: "Lectures on the French Revolution," p. 97.

SECRET SOCIETIES AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

THE spiritual life of nations, if it could be fully revealed, would alter many of the judgments of posterity. New interpretations of ancient tragedies and crimes, new motives for speech and action, new inspirations for revolution and war might then present themselves for the consideration of the historian. If it needs divination to discern the aspiration and desire enclosed within the ordinary human soul, how much more does it need divination to read aright the principles and incentives that lay behind historic actions? Diviners have not written history, and professional historians have generally chosen to deal with facts, rather than with their psychological significance. Because of this preference, certain conventions have grown up amongst the writers of history, and certain obvious economic and social conflicts and conditions have been accepted as the cause of events, at the cost of repudiating that mystical and vague, but ever constant idealism,

which spurs man on towards his unknown destiny.

Especially has this been the case in dealing with the origin of the French Revolution. Nearly all secular historians have ignored the secret utopian societies which flourished before its outbreak ; or have agreed that they had no bearing, direct or indirect, upon the actual subversion of affairs. Since the world has always been at the mercy of the idealists, and since human society has ever been the object of their unending empiricism, it is hard to believe that the greatest experiment of modern history was engineered without their co-operation. More than any other age does the eighteenth century need its psychologist, for more than any other age, if interpreted, could it illumine the horizons of generations to come.

Amongst the historians who have attempted to explain the forces which brought about the great upheaval of the eighteenth century there have been priests of the Catholic Church. To the elucidation of the great problems involved they have brought to bear knowledge and diligent research, but we must recognise that the black cassock is the uniform of an army drilled

and maintained for a specific purpose, and that purpose is war against much that the Revolution stood for. Two priests, Barruel and Deschamps, who feared the cryptic confederacies, wrote books to prove that the purpose of the secret societies before and after the great Revolution was not the betterment of the condition of the people, but the overthrow of the Church, the destruction of Christian society, and the re-establishment of Paganism. However much preparation may have been required to enfranchise thought, no great measure of organisation or mystery was or is needful to enable men to live as Pagans if they so desire, and little meaning is to be extracted from this theory unless it be realised that in some of these works freedom of thought and Paganism are interchangeable terms. Secular amateurs of the curious and unexplained have written desultory books on the same secret societies, and in the early nineteenth century the works of Mounier, de Luchet, and Robison attracted a good deal of attention ; but save for these special pleaders it has been accepted that there is little of practical moment to be noted of the connection between secret societies and the Revolution. In the

books which have appeared since that date there has been a conspicuous absence of any new material or of any fresh treatment of old theories. Many general histories of masonry have been published exalting masonic influences; but, speaking solely with reference to France, no effort has been made by any scientific or unprejudiced person outside masonry to explain the increasing membership of secret societies, the greater activity of lodges of all rites during the years that preceded the Revolution, and the sudden disappearance of those lodges in the early months of 1789. Nor has it been attempted to place these important factors in progress in right relation with the other inducements and tendencies which drove eighteenth-century France to accomplish her own liberation.

Le Couteulx de Canteleu, who wrote on the general question of the secret societies of the eighteenth century,* professed to have access to documents that gave his words importance and weight, and his book, though slight in character, is one of the most interesting studies on the subject. Papus (Gérard Encausse) has written

* "Les Sectes et les Sociétés Secrètes."

on individual founders of rites and on some mystical teachers of the day, and Amiable, an eminent mason, has published a pleasant record of a particular lodge up till the year 1789, as well as a short summary of the influence of masonry on the great Revolution. The published information is fragmentary, as is to be expected in view of the nature of the subject, and the difficulty of grasping the work of the confederates as a whole is insurmountable until further light is cast upon their methods and instruments; for though the general drift of the underground social currents has frequently been discussed, and though occasionally a microscopic inquiry has been made into ceremonial and the lives of individuals, owing either to lack of material or lack of sincerity, books dealing with these matters are incomplete and partial accounts of what, properly investigated, might prove to be a vast co-ordinated attempt at the reconstruction of society.

It has been the convention for most historians to ignore such activities, just as it has been the practice of priests to recognise in them the destroyers of all morality. Louis Blanc and Henri Martin, in their respective histories,

each devote a chapter to the discussion of secret societies. The former speaks of masonry as "a denunciation indirect but real and continuous of the miseries of the social order," as "a propaganda in action," "a living exhortation." With the exception of these and a few other authors who from time to time allude to the secret societies, historians have elucidated the crisis of the eighteenth century with no estimate of their influence. Taine, of whom it may be said that his thesis occasionally determined the choice of his facts, does not number them among the origins of the new conditions in France.

The Great Revolution has been assumed to be a spontaneous national uprising against oppression, privilege, immorality in high places, and conditions of life making existence a burden for the proletariat. Such a theory would cover the rebellion that razed the Bastille and caused the clamour at Versailles, that destroyed the country houses and killed the nobles; but it does not cover the intellectual and social reforms which were the kernel of the Revolution, and its true objective. These, on the other hand, have been too easily attributed to the publication of the "Encyclopædia," and of certain other volumes

by Beccaria, Rousseau, or Voltaire. Books were undoubtedly partially responsible for the awakening of the educated classes. The rationalist presses in Dublin, the Hague, and London, poured pamphlets into France to be sold by itinerant booksellers, who hawked them in country districts concealed beneath a thin layer of prayer-books and catechisms. But the pamphlets and books more often found their way to the public pyre than to the domestic hearth, and it can hardly be argued that these irregularly distributed volumes were directly responsible for the Revolution, though they too formed one of the contributory agencies of that cataclysm.

Men have said that liberal ideas were in the air, and that no one could so much as breathe without inhaling them; but this suggestion is meaningless, for to say ideas are "in the air" is to say many people hold them, which is hardly a way of accounting for their being held by many people. A suggestion so unsatisfying constrains us to seek the causes of contagion in a theory of more direct contact. If a book would not set a midland village on fire to-day, how much less would it have done so in the

olden days when the poorest classes were completely unlettered? The "Encyclopædia" and the works of economists and philosophers made their appeal in intellectual circles, and those words of reasonableness and light scarcely could have illumined the mental twilight of the lower bourgeoisie, much less have penetrated the darkness in which the peasant classes lived. Yet the Revolution, as its results testify, was a national movement towards a new order of affairs, and not a general declension towards anarchy. Therefore, since a spontaneous upheaval is unthinkable, and the history of smaller revolutions leads us to infer that revolution is always the result of associative agitation, it probably originated in a certain co-ordination of ideas and doctrines. These ideas and doctrines must have been widely diffused and widely apprehended, yet they could not have been spread by ordinary demagogic means; for not only was freedom of speech prohibited, but it was illegal to publish unorthodox books. The publication of the "Encyclopædia" was forbidden in 1759, and both Frederick the Great and Catherine of Russia offered asylum to its authors. Till a few years before the Revolution

it had been the custom to silence murmuring minorities by sword or fire. In 1762 the pastor Rochette died for his opinions, and the three Protestant brothers Grenier were decapitated, ostensibly for street brawling, but in reality for their faith. Monsieur de Laraguais was presented with a "lettre de cachet" for the citadel at Metz, for reading a paper in favour of inoculation before an assembly of the Academy in Paris.* His defence was that by his advocacy he hoped to preserve to France the lives of the fifty thousand persons who died annually of small-pox. So associated had imprisonment and execution become with the holding of liberal ideas that when Boulanger died almost coincidently with the publication of his book "Les Recherches sur le Despotisme Oriental," men speculated whether his death could be attributed to natural causes.† "Bélisaire," a moral and political romance by M. de Marmontel, provoked a tumult. Bachaumont relates that the Sorbonne saw fit to protest against Chapter XV., "which treats of Tolerance." ‡ In consequence the book was suppressed. "La Confession de

* "Mémoires Secret de Bachaumont," vol. i. p. 286.

† *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 292. ‡ *Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 168.

Foi d'un Vicaire Savoyard" exerted an extraordinary influence in unseating existing authorities. It was what the publication of the Bible had been to Germany, an obligation to private judgment. The author of this book after this effort fell back on making laces since he could not take up his pen without making every power in Europe tremble.

How is it possible that, when such penalties threatened the efforts of writers and speakers, ideas of progress could be cherished in thousands of minds, and the passion for social regeneration flame in countless souls? Though there was no enunciation of liberal hopes in the market-places, yet an invisible hand, as in the day of Daniel, had written in flaming letters the word "brotherhood" across the tablets of French hearts. Was the dissemination of ideas, and the diffusion of enthusiasm, to be accounted for by the spirit of the age; or did the theory of the modern State generate spontaneously in the minds of Frenchmen? Was the great Revolution a mere accident, or was it the inevitable result of co-ordinated ideas in action? Taine was of the opinion that the doctrines propagated themselves, carried like thistle-down upon the winds of chance.

The obvious inference to be drawn from his opinion is that the social idealists of the eighteenth century lacked either the courage or the zeal to further their beliefs; and that they, unlike their forerunners or their successors, were ready to entrust their hopes to the written word, and leave the rest to the gods. It is making too great a demand on human credulity to ask man to believe this, and many significant facts witness to the hitherto unestimated work of the secret societies in furthering the cause of popular emancipation. Ideas are not suddenly converted into swords. Men must have hammered patiently and hard upon the anvil of the national soul to produce the keen-edged, swift-striking blade of revolution.

"The aim of all social institutions should be the amelioration of the physical, mental and moral condition of the poorest classes," said one whom Barruel alluded to as "a demon hating Jesus Christ." The speaker was Condorcet,* a man acquainted with the ideals of the secret societies. In announcing the eventual publication of the "History of the Progress of the

* At the Loge des Philaléthes, Strasbourg, p. 41. Robison.

Human Mind," a work interrupted by his death, he spoke of the destruction of old authorities by invisible associations. "There are moments in history," said George Sand, "when Empires exist but in name, and when their only life lies in the societies that are hidden in their heart." Such a moment for France was the reign of Louis XVI.

Legends of secret societies survived in every part of Europe at the opening of the eighteenth century. They existed for the prosecution of Theurgia as well as Goetia, for masonry as well as mystical philosophy. Speaking generally, their interest did not lie in the region of politics or polemics, but in that of study, experiment, and speculation; and their chief care was the preservation and elucidation of ancient hermetic and traditional secrets. As a rule the Church had persecuted such societies, though her prelates had frequently condescended to the study of magic, and a few among them like Pope John XXII. had spent long nights in alchemical experiment. It remained for the utopians of the eighteenth century so to interpret the symbolism of the secret societies, so to affiliate them, and so to organise the forces of masonry, mysticism and magic, as

for a few years to unite them into a power capable not only of inspiring but of precipitating the greatest social upheaval of Christendom.

It is difficult to believe or understand, that bodies holding differing doctrines, adherents of many rites, disciples of divergent masters, ever commingled for a day in their enthusiasm for the common cause; yet this singular and Hegelian amalgamation seems in practice to have taken place.* The principal force in the trinity of masonry, mysticism, and magic was masonry, and it, like many other innovations, was introduced into France from England. Just as Voltaire and Rousseau derived their philosophy from English sources, and applied the theories they absorbed in a direct manner to the life of their own country, so did the French people derive their masonic institutions from England, and apply them for purposes of social regeneration in a fashion never even contemplated in the land of their origin. The English Deists, Hume, Locke, and Toland, were responsible for the intellectual regeneration of France, just as the Legitimist lodges planted in that country after the Stuart downfall were responsible for the

* p. 344, vol. iv. Barruel.

many lodges of tolerance, charity, truth, and candour which disseminated the seeds of the humanitarian movement on French soil. The Pantheisticon became the model of French societies.

Until the sixteenth century masonic corporations in England and other countries consisted of three purely professional grades holding the secrets of the architectural craft, the mysteries of proportion, and the true canon of building. The epics in grey stone our cathedral towns enclose memorialise the tradition of the older masonry, and testify to the inviolability of its secret formulæ. In every Catholic land, from Paris to Batalha, from Salisbury to Cologne, rise the superb conceptions of the masonic mind: serene, unchallengeable symbols of doctrines, mysteries, and myths, the venerable shrines of uncounted memories. During the sixteenth century England became the motherland of a newer masonry. Another spirit then permeated the craft; mysteries as ancient as the canon of building and the lost word of the Temple, Egyptian rites and Greek initiations, were blended with the purer traditions of the past. Rosicrucians, like Francis Bacon and Elias

Ashmole, joined the hitherto exclusively professional body. Out of this marriage of thoughts and aims arose the modern masonic system, of which England at the end of the sixteenth century alone knew the secret. So thoroughly was the old system transfused with speculative ideas that by 1703 it had been decided that the antique guild model of masonry should be abandoned for a scheme of wider comprehension, embracing men holding certain common ideals and aspirations irrespective of craft or art. By this decision masonry became really free; though the actual bases on which the future of the new "speculative," as the development of the old "operative" masonry, was to be established, were not laid down till 1717 by a commission of the Grand Lodge of London. Sir Christopher Wren, the last of the Grand Masters of the older organisation, was followed in his great office in two successive years by foreigners—A. Sayer and Desaguliers, who inaugurated a more cosmopolitan era, and assisted in weaving the strands of brotherhood between England and foreign lands.

Though legend ascribes the English Revolution and the ascendency of Cromwell to masonic

influence, records reveal and attest that the associative facilities masonic gatherings afforded were found favourable during the Civil War to the contriving of Royalists' plots rather than to the promotion of Republican schemes. Charles II. was a mason, James II. was championed by lodges, and both the Pretenders instituted rites with the object of accomplishing their own restoration.

The Legitimists first introduced Freemasonry into France. Lord Derwentwater, the brother of the Lord Derwentwater who had been beheaded in 1716, was one of the earliest masonic missionaries. Together with Maskelyne, Heguerty, and others, he founded the first lodge in France at Dunkerque in 1721, the year in which the Regent died. Other lodges were inaugurated in Paris in 1725, all with the intention of rallying supporters of the Stuart cause. These were granted charters from London, and were ruled over by a Grand Master, called Lord Harnwester, of whom little is known. The most interesting personality among the Legitimist votaries was Andrew Michael Ramsay, commonly called the Chevalier. The son of a baker, he was educated at Edinburgh Univer-

sity, and became tutor to the two sons of Lord Wemyss; then going to the Netherlands with the English auxiliaries, he made friends with the mystical theologist Poiret, and in consequence of the latter's quietist influence, gave up soldiering, and went to consult Fénelon about his future. He soon became the Archbishop's intimate friend, as well as a convert to his Church, and remaining with him till his death found himself the legatee of all his papers, and thus the designated chronicler of his life. This life was published at the Hague in 1723, and in the following year Ramsay went as travelling tutor to the two sons of James Francis Edward. On his return to Paris he continued his tutorial work in other families, combining it with the most strenuously active masonic life. He professed to have derived his elaborate and numerous rites from Godfrey de Bouillon, and managed to popularise masonry and exalt it into a fashionable pursuit. Gradually the English lodges in Paris became a subject of curiosity and conversation in society, and so long as they remained concerned with the affairs of a foreign kingdom they were left undisturbed by the officials of their adopted

country. When, however, Frenchmen began to enrol themselves as masons, and some exclusively French lodges were founded, the newspapers alarmed the public by announcing that Freemasonry had become the vogue. Police regulations were at once issued to prohibit meetings, and Louis XV. forbade gentlemen his Court, and even threatened with the Bastille those who attended lodge gatherings. A zealous commissary of police, Jean de Lespinay, spying on a meeting held at Chapelot's inn, ordered the assembly to dissolve ; but the Duc d'Antin responded by commanding the official interloper to retire. He went meekly enough, but Chapelot was deprived of his licence a few days later, and fined a thousand francs. Masons surprised at the Hôtel de Soissons were imprisoned in Fors l'Evêque, and notice was given to innkeepers that on sheltering such gatherings they made themselves liable to a fine of three thousand francs. These edicts stimulated the curiosity of the public, and every one became inquisitive as to the aims and objects of the mysterious association. Mademoiselle Cambon, an opera-singer, managed to extract a document from

her lover containing instruction on masonic ritual. It was easy then to parody their practices. Eight dancing-girls executed at her instigation a "Freemason ballet," while the Jesuits of the Dubois College at Caen made their rites the subject of a pantomime.

In 1737 the old and amiable councillor of Louis XV., Cardinal Fleury, forbade good Catholics to attend at the lodges, and the next year Clement XII. condemned Freemasonry in a bull. Notwithstanding this opposition the craft grew numerically, and under the protective influence of the Grand Master, the Duc d'Antin, some of the educational work which forms their greatest claim to historic recognition was undertaken. In 1738 the Grand Master urged all masons to help in the work of the great Encyclopædia, and to assist in forming "that library which in one work should contain the light of all nations." He alluded in his speech to the experiment made previously in London, and appealed for subscriptions for the furtherance of the French work. His secret correspondence with enlightened sympathisers in all parts of Europe enabled him to announce to the lodges in 1740 that the advent of the great

work was eagerly awaited in every foreign land. Masonic subscription made possible the commencement of the work by Diderot in 1741. If proof were needed to show that in France, in its most corrupt days, men existed who were preaching brotherhood, love, equality, and freedom, the proof exists in the speeches of the Duc d'Antin, who was a Revolutionary half a century before the Revolution. A discourse delivered by him at the "Grande Loge solennellement assemblée à Paris" reveals his attitude and that of his associates towards the feudal society of his day:

"Les hommes ne sont pas distingués essentiellement par la différence des langues qu'ils parlent, des habits qu'ils portent, des pays qu'ils occupent, ni des dignités dont ils sont revêtus. Le monde entier n'est qu'une grande république, dont chaque nation est une famille et chaque particulier un enfant. C'est pour faire revivre et répandre ces essentielles maximes, prises dans la nature de l'homme, que notre société fut d'abord établie. Nous voulons réunir tous les hommes d'un esprit éclairé, de mœurs douces, et d'une humeur agréable, non seulement pour

l'amour des beaux arts mais encore plus par les grands principes de vertu, de science et de religion, où l'intérêt de contraternité devient celui du genre humain entier, où toutes les nations peuvent puiser des connaissances solides, et où les sujets de tous les royaumes peuvent apprendre à se chérir mutuellement, sans renoncer à leur patrie. . . . Quelle obligation n'a-t-on pas à ces hommes supérieurs qui, sans intérêt grossier, sans même écouter l'envie naturelle de dominer ont imaginé un établissement dont l'unique but est la réunion des esprits et des cœurs pour les rendre meilleurs, et former dans la suite des temps une nation toute spirituelle où sans déroger aux divers devoirs que la différence des états exige, on créera un peuple nouveau qui étant composé de plusieurs nations, les cimentera toutes, en quelque sorte par le lien de la vertu et de la science."*

A well-informed person revealed to the world some of the masonic secrets of equality and tolerance.† The author, whose ladyhood was

* "Une Loge Maçonnique d'avant 1789," p. 11.

† "La Franc-Maçonnerie, ou révélations des mystères des franc-maçons." Par Madame * * *

probably fictitious, was merely printing and making public the aspirations of all those who were longing to assist at the eventual social regeneration of France :

" Il est trés naturel de deviner le secret des francmaçons par l'examen de ce qu'on leur voit pratiquer constamment. Ils entrent sans distinction les grands et les petits : ils se mesurent tous au même niveau ; ils mangent ensemble pêle-mêle ; ils se répandent dans le monde entier avec la même uniformité. Il est donc plus que probable, concluai-je, qu'il n'est question chez eux que d'une maçonnerie purement symbolique, dont le secret consiste à bâtir insensiblement une république, universelle et démocratique, dont la reine sera la raison, et le conseil suprême l'assemblée des sages."

When the Duc d'Antin's grand mastership ceased, a temporary debasement of masonry resulted. Great abuses crept into the craft, for under his successsor, the Comte de Clermont, lodges were irregularly established, and dignities were sold. Androgynous societies, the cause of continual scandal, were established. The Society of Jesus also endeavoured to disrupt masonic

organisation, and very speedily the "Grande Loge" split up into factions. The Comte de Clermont possibly was the servant of the Church and the real promoter of the schisms of his society. He had blended the careers of cleric and soldier in a curious manner, for though tonsured at nine years old, and subsequently dowered with rich abbeys, he was enabled later, through a Papal dispensation, to enter the army, where he quickly rose to commanding rank, and showed himself as useless a general as he afterwards proved himself a Grand Master. As his working substitutes in the "Grande Loge de France" he nominated a financier named Baure, and a dancing-master named Lacorne. For eighteen years the "Grande Loge de France" was convulsed by discord and evil practice, justifying only too accurately the strictures of the Church. It obeyed with something like relief the order of the civil authorities in 1767 to hold no further meetings, and remained quiescent till the Comte de Clermont's death in 1771. In this year it was proposed to reform its organisation thoroughly. Emissaries were sent into all parts of France to take count of the situation, and to prepare reports for the

central committee. In consequence of these reports it was decided that the association should be reorganised on a more democratic basis, every office being made annually elective. The Duc de Chartres was chosen as Grand Master, and the Duc de Luxembourg as general administrator. As the Duc de Chartres did not at once accept the Grand Mastership, he never in point of action was Grand Master of the "Loge de France," though in 1773 an assembly met, which, after confirming the elections of 1771, installed him with great solemnity in his office as head of the "Grand Orient." The meeting convened for this occasion at Folie-Titon, a "maison de plaisance," constituted the parliament of masonry, though not all the lodges consented to send representatives to it.

"Le Grand Orient n'est plus qu'un corps formé par la réunion des répresentants libres de toutes les loges: ce sont les loges elles-mêmes, ce sont tous les maçons membres de ces loges, qui par la voie de leurs représentants donnent les lois; qui les font observer d'une part et qui les observent de l'autre. Nul

n'obéit qu'à la loi qu'il s'est imposée lui-même. C'est le plus libre, le plus juste, le plus naturel, et par conséquent le plus parfait des gouvernements."*

The council of the new organisation sat in the former Jesuit novitiate of the rue Pot de Fer, and worked with increasing power and industry until the outbreak of the Revolution that was to realise their ideals. A section of the "Grande Loge de France" refused to obey the "Grand Orient," and continued to operate independently. The "Empereurs d'Orient et d'Occident" and the "Chevaliers d'Orient" also worked separately, nor would they take part in the amalgamation. Later on, however, great changes took place in masonic opinion, while bonds of common interest drew together lodges that would, without the political interest, always have been divided.

Not only was France the home of many masonic lodges, but its social system was riddled with mystical societies which gathered their initiates from among the adepts of masonic grades, and owned allegiance to no supreme

* "Une Loge Maçonnique d'avant 1789," p. 29.

council. Swedenborg and Martinez de Pasqually always regarded masonry as a school of instruction, and considered it the elementary and inferior step that led to the higher mysteries. In consequence of their teaching it came about that a great number of sects and rites were instituted in all parts of Europe, whose unity consisted in a common masonic initiation, but whose aims, doctrines, and practices were often irreconcilable. The Martinézists, or followers of Martinez de Pasqually, were a distinctively French sect; they had lodges in Paris in 1754, and also at Toulouse, Poitiers, Marseilles, and other places. The term "Illuminates" is applied to them equally with the Swedenborgians, Martinists, and several germane societies.

Pasqually is said to have been a Rosicrucian adept. His teaching was theurgic and moral, and his avowed object was to develop the somnolent divine faculties in humanity, and to lead man to enter into communication with the invisible, by means of "La Chose," the enigmatic name he gave to the highest secret. He is chiefly interesting as having been the first to permeate the higher grades of French masonry with illuminism, an example followed afterwards

with conspicuous success by the disciples of Weishaupt. When Pasqually died in Haiti his teaching was taken up by Willermooz, a Lyonese merchant, also by the celebrated Louis Claude de Saint-Martin. Saint-Martin absorbed and developed his master's teaching in a peculiar and personal manner, and through his philosophy became an important influence on then current affairs. He had been an officer in the regiment of Foix at Bordeaux when he first became acquainted with Pasqually, and soon after meeting him he threw up his commission in the army with the object of devoting his life to meditation, and the study of Jacob Boehme. He became the mystical philosopher of the Revolution, and the book he published in 1775, "Des Erreurs et de la Vérité," produced an immense sensation, comparable to that created by the publication of "La Profession de Foi d'un Vicaire Savoyard." Like Rousseau, he believed in the infinite possibilities of man, holding that Providence had planted a religion in man's heart "which could not be contaminated by priestly traffic, nor tainted by imposture." Rousseau gave the name of conscience to "the innate principle of justice and virtue which,

independently of experience and in spite of ourselves, forms the basis of our judgments"; Saint-Martin thought it the divine instinct. On the belief in man's essential goodness both founded their demand for social revolution, claiming an opportunity for men to be indeed men and not slaves, a chance for climbing back to that old God-designed level of happiness from which they had descended. Saint-Martin saw in such a movement the awakening of men from the sleep of death, and with deep conviction he responded to the cry "All men are priests," uttered three centuries earlier by Luther, with the cry "All men are kings!" The answer to the social enigmas of the century was whispered by him in the "ternaire sacré" of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity; and it echoed with reverberating clangor through all the lodges of France. Martinist societies were everywhere founded to study the doctrines contained in his book, and to expound the teachings of the mystical philosopher who, like Lamartine in a later day, contemplated the Revolution as Christianity applied to politics.

A volume might easily be written upon the

lodges and rites in France during this time; and their very number makes choice of those deserving peculiar mention bewildering. The well-known "Loge des Amis Réunis," or "Philalèthes," inaugurated by "the man of all conspiracies," Savalette de Lange, and his friends, carried on an important correspondence with lodges in every quarter of Europe. Under the pretext of pleasant gatherings and luxurious dinners these "friends of truth" prosecuted the dark and dangerous work of preparing that reformation of society which in practice became Revolution. One of the most famous, if not the most interesting, of the intellectual lodges, was that of the "Neuf Soeurs" in Paris, founded in memory of Helvetius, which, if it held a secret, held the secret of Voltaire, "Humanity and Tolerance." It was intended to be an encyclopædic workshop, a complement to the already existing Lodge of Sciences. Since all the secondary education in France was in the hands of a clerical corporation, and the Sorbonne was dedicated to theology, the "Neuf Soeurs" organised * "la Société Apollonienne." This society arranged for courses of lectures

* November 17, 1780.

to be given by its more eminent members; Marmontel and Garat, for example, lectured on history, La Harpe on literature, Condorcet and De la Croix on chemistry, Fourcroy and Sue on anatomy and physiology. The improvised college did not shut its doors during the Revolution, but changed its name to "Lycée Républicain." Its professors conformed to Republican usages, and La Harpe was to be seen lecturing in a red cap.

Some useful institutions seem to have been evolved out of the conclaves of the "Neuf Soeurs," including the reformed laws of criminal procedure embodied in the Code Napoléon.* The Duc de la Rochefoucauld, translator of the American Constitution, was an associate of the lodge, so was Forster, who sailed round the world with Captain Cook; Brissot, who was later condemned as leader of the Girondins, Camille Desmoulins, Fauchet, Romme, Bailly, Rabaud Saint Etienne, Danton, André Chénier, Dom Gerle, Paul Jones, Franklin, Guillotin, Cabanis, Pétion, Sieyès, Cerutti, Hanna, and Voltaire. Together they form an illustrious company who, all in their varying ways, took con-

* "Une Loge Maçonnique d'avant 1789," p. 243.

spicuous shares in the work of reformation. Commemorative assemblies and processions were organised by this lodge on the occasions of the deaths of Franklin, Voltaire, and Paul Jones, the liberators. The lodge has received historic consecration at the hands of Louis Blanc, Henri Martin, and Amiable. Having accomplished a great work, it disappeared, like all the other lodges, at the opening of the Revolution.

The share that women took in promoting social changes has not received the attention it deserves. Readers of Dumas are familiar with the fact that in country districts fraternal societies welcoming members of both sexes met regularly in barns and farms; but it does not seem to be usually recognised that apart from the "Loges de la Félicité," which had been the occasion of frequent scandal, many regular and well-conducted "lodges of adoption" for women were recognised by the "Grand Orient." The Duchess de Bourbon, Egalité's sister, was Grand Mistress of the adoptive lodge of "la Candeur" in 1775, and Princesse de Lamballe and Madame de Genlis also wielded the hammer. The work of these fashionable dames cannot, however, be taken seriously. It was a pastime

for them, just as were the decorous fêtes held within the lodges in which both men and women participated. The entertainments were elegant and refined, often taking the form of the illustration of a virtue such as benevolence, or of homage to some humanitarian quality. For example, one day a lady discovered that a poor working woman with nine children had added to her burdens by adopting the orphan of a friend. The ladies of her lodge were enthusiastic at such generosity, and caused the poor woman to be exhibited at one of their reunions in a tableau surrounded by the ten children. After considerable acclamation she was allowed to go her way with clothes and money presented by her admirers. "Bienfaisance" was a particularly fashionable virtue. Women of society raised altars in their rooms dedicated to this quality. The tone of society, however, was not wholly sentimental; it was also reasonable, and it became the vogue for ladies to attend scientific lectures; classes in drawing-rooms on mineralogy, chemistry, and physics were well attended; ladies were no longer painted as goddesses, but as students, in laboratories, surrounded by telescopes and retorts; Countess Voyer attended

dissections, and one of her friends wielded the scalpel with grace; Madame de Genlis, whose self-satisfaction is almost priggish, alludes in her memoirs to the intense pleasure she derived from some geological lectures.

While the world of fashion was playing with science and masonry, the opinions and beliefs of its social inferiors were gradually crystallising into action. Serious women of the bourgeoisie and farmer classes attended meetings and discussions and taught their sons and their husbands what it meant to fight for an ideal; and how the *ternaire sacré* could be translated into fact.

At the lowest computation there were seven hundred lodges in France before the Revolution, and a very large proportion of them had acknowledged "lodges of adoption" for women. It is impossible from the material published on the subject, however, to form even an approximate estimate of the number of members of either sex belonging to these associations. It was very large, but the claim to a million adherents made by the "Loge de la Candeur" in 1785 is clearly greatly in excess of actual fact. At Bayonne "La Zélée," at Angers the "Tendre Accueil," at Saint-Malo

the "Triple Espérance," at Rheims the "Triple Union," at Tours the "Amis de la Vertu" flourished. Poignant satires on credulity were delivered at the "Loge de la Parfaite Intelligence" at Liége to which the Prince Bishop and the greater part of his chapter belonged, and of which all the office-bearers were dignitaries of the Church. The system seems to have permeated every section of French national life.

Pernetti, a Benedictine, librarian of Frederick the Great, had founded a Swedenborgian brotherhood at Avignon, in company with a Polish noble Gabrionka, who by some is supposed to have been Cagliostro, and Pernetti is but an example of dozens of other missionaries. Everywhere gatherings and associations existed, separated by rites and by practices, but united in intention by their common love for and faith in the creed of brotherhood.

One thing only was needed to transform this heterogeneous collection of lodges, sects, and rites into a powerful political lever upon society, and that was a mind which could devise a common course of action or a common political understanding to unite them. Secret idealistic societies had done a wonderful work in fostering

principles and hopes and ideals, but in order to become effective in action transmutation of some kind was necessary.

Masonic writers have of late made but little allusion to the influence of the German "illuminates" on the French lodges, and are disposed to detract from the reputation of the marvellous organiser Weishaupt, Professor of Canon Law at the University of Ingoldstadt. Barruel, Louis Blanc, and Deschamps unite, however, in regarding him as the most profound of conspirators. Le Couteulx de Canteleu considers the young professor of Ingolstadt as the originator of a remarkable system, of which Von Knigge was the most able missionary. With Weishaupt alone lay the credit not only of realising the cause of the ineffectiveness of societies upon society, but of elaborating an homogeneous scheme which was destined to embrace and eventually absorb all lodges and all rites. He was no freemason when he invented his design, but in order to study masonic methods he was received as a mason in Munich, where one Zwack, a legal member of the lodge, afterwards one of Weishaupt's confederates, sold him the ultimate secrets of masonry. Equipped with this know-

ledge he allied himself with Von Knigge of the "Strict Observance," and caused all his own disciples to become masons. "Every secret engagement is a source of enthusiasm," said Weishaupt; "it is useless to seek for the reasons; the fact exists, that is enough." In conformity with this belief he recruited the new secret society which he intended should absorb all the others.

In 1776 the order of the Perfectibilists was founded. They began by creating a new world, for they purposed to work independently of existing conditions. They invented their own calandar, with new divisions of time and new names for days and periods; they took unto themselves the appellations of Greece and Rome. Weishaupt became Spartacus, after the leader of the servile insurrection in the time of Pompey; Von Knigge became Philo; Zwack, Cato; Costanzo, Diomedes; Nicolai, Lucian. The map of Europe was re-named; in their correspondence Munich was Athens; Austria Egypt; and France Illyria. The organisation of the Perfectibilists was designed to enlist all professions and both sexes. It consisted of two large classes, that of "preparations" and that

of "mysteries." In the former there were four grades: novice, minerval, illuminate minor, and illuminate major. In the latter there were also four grades: priest, regent, philosopher, and man-king. There was also a "plant-nursery" for children, and a class in which women were trained to influence men. The associates who possessed the full confidence of Weishaupt were called Areopagites.

The order was designed as the directing instrument of that social revolution which Weishaupt and many others knew to be imminent. France was the country selected for the great experiment, and Weishaupt faced with courage the problem that students of social questions realised in the latter half of the eighteenth century would be the difficulty in any revolution. He saw like them that the future class struggle for survival and supremacy in France would lie between the bourgeoisie and the people, that the nobles would count for nothing in the contest. He knew that the commercial classes were extremely rich, that in so far as the actual administrative work went it was in the hands of the third estate, that in the event of revolution it would become the

first and perhaps the only power in the country. A consideration of the representative institutions of France before the Revolution convinces us of the fact that the actual people were unrepresented, and moreover that it was unlikely that they would ever have a voice in the management of affairs, unless their claims were enforced by well organised and wide reaching secret societies. Weishaupt's scheme was intended to prevent the bourgeoisie reaping all the revolutionary harvest. As a disciple of Rousseau he did not favour the establishment of commercial supremacy as a substitute for the old system of autocracy. "Salvation does not lie where shining thrones are defended by swords, where the smoke of the censors ascends to heaven, or where thousands of starving men pace the rich fields of harvest. The revolution which is about to break upon us will be sterile if it is not complete." He feared that the concessions of kings, and the removal of food taxes, might delude the people into the belief that all was well, and he imparted his fear to his disciples. His object in establishing the Perfectibilists was the literal realisation of Rousseau's theories. He dreamt of and schemed for a day when the

abolition of property, social authority, and nationality would be facts, when human beings would return to that happy state in which they form but one family.* Being an ex-Jesuit and acquainted with the organisation of that order, he determined to adapt its system to his own scheme, to make as it were a counter-society of Jesus. All the maxims and rules of Jesuit administration were to be pushed further and applied more rigorously than had been contemplated by their inventors. Passive obedience, universal espionage, and all the dialectic of casuistry were his chosen tools, and so successful was the undertaking that in four years a system of communication and information with every part of Europe had been established. The unseen hands of the society were in all affairs, its ears in the cabinets of princes and cardinals. The Church was regarded unrelentingly as a foe, for the Perfectibilists were the enemies of institutional Christianity, and represented themselves as professors of the purest Christian Socialism. Weishaupt classed the theological and sacerdotal systems among the worst enemies of man, and in his instructions to his disciples urged that

* Letter of Spartacus to Cato, p. 160. Robison.

they should be contended with as definite evils. And the Church feared him, for did he not declare that men were still slaves because they still knelt? Did he not command the people to rise from their knees? Abbé Deschamps, in "Les sociétés secrètes et la societé," expresses his dread of the machinations of so terrible an Order, and points out that "once dechristianised the masses will claim absolute equality and the right to enjoy life!"

Weishaupt, on the other hand, said: "He who would work for the happiness of the human race, for the contentment and peace of man, for the diminishing of discontent, should examine and then enfeeble the principles which trouble that peace, that content, that happiness. Of this class are all systems which are opposed to the ennobling and perfecting of human nature; all systems which unnecessarily multiply the evils of the world, and represent them as greater than they really are; all systems which depreciate the merit and the dignity of man, which diminish his confidence in his own natural forces, which decry human reason, and so open the way for imposture."

The candidate for the grade of epopt, or

priest, among the Perfectibilists was, before his initiation into the higher mysteries, introduced into a hall, wherin stood a magnificent dais surmounted by a throne. In front of the throne stood a table laden with jewels, gold coins, a sceptre, crown, and sword. "'Look,' said the epopt chief, 'if this crown and sceptre, monuments of human degradation and imbecility, tempt thee; if thy heart is with them; if thou wouldst help kings to oppress men, we will place thee as near a throne as thou desirest; but our sanctuary will be closed to thee, and we shall abandon thee for ever to thy folly. If, on the contrary, thou art willing to devote thyself to making men happy and free, be welcome here. . . . Decide!'"

After decision the would-be initiate had to make a frank and detailed confession of all the actions of his life. Weishaupt thought this a very important preliminary to higher knowledge, because it gave him cognisance of personal secrets which would make betrayal of the order on the part of the novice dangerous and often impossible. The verification of the confession was proceeded with in a dark room, decorated with symbols and emblems of mystery. A

book called the "Code Scrutateur" was opened, and all the faults of the candidate, his hates, loves, confidences, and fears were read out loud. These had been extracted from the unconscious victim, or from his friends, by the "insinuating brethren," whose business it was to find out everything about every member of their society. When all this was over a curtain was drawn aside, revealing an altar surmounted by a large crucifix. The candidate was tonsured, vested with sacerdotal garments, and given the red Phrygian cap of the epopt, with these words: "Wear this cap; it means more than the crown of kings"—a prophecy verified by the Revolution.

In the lower grades of Illuminism recruits had no knowledge of such ceremonies. They were allowed to think that they were supporting orthodox Christianity and old authorities, and in this way time was gained for studying the character of recruits, and unsuitable members were weeded out. Later on, as they gradually climbed the ladder of initiation, it was revealed to them that Jesus had come to teach men reasonableness and not superstition, and that His only precepts were love of God and love

of humanity. Camille Desmoulins invoked the "Sans-culotte Jésus" during the Revolution, claiming Him as the pattern Socialist. Jesus, the Illuminists said, came to dissipate prejudice, to spread light and wise morality, to show men how to govern themselves. He was the true liberator of man, and the teacher of equality and liberty.

It has been argued with some plausibility that since such harmless and conservative people as the Duke of Sachs-Gotha and Prince August of Sachs-Weimar were illuminates, Louis XVI. and Frederick the Great masons, the secret societies could have had no direct influence on the social upheaval, and therefore are not worthy of the serious consideration of the historian. The study of the organisation of the great secret service reveals the reason of this contention and also its futility. The lower grades of masonry and Illuminism served a double-edged purpose : that of concealing the existence of the higher grades, and that of proving the worthiness of earnest searchers after social regeneration to enter those higher grades. Mystery of any kind always attracts the weak-minded, and Illuminism allured many dupes whom it was necessary to

keep at arm's length from realities. The existence of serious purpose had also studiously to be concealed from royalties and prelates, for hierarchical religion is dear to all supporters of autocracy. Yet it was politic to lull the suspicions of the conservative and governing classes by admitting them with apparent freedom and joy into the Order. It was a policy of disarmament, and Weishaupt was quite candid as to this, for anything was better for the cause than open enmity.

"If it is to our interest to have the ordinary schools on our side, it is also very important to win over the ecclesiastical seminaries and their superiors; for in that way we should secure the best part of the country, and disarm the greatest enemies of all innovation; and what is still better, in winning the ecclesiastics, we should have the people in our hands."

To many Perfectibilists, illuminism and masonry were but charming social amusements, signifying nothing. The doctrines of social subversion, the creeds and dogmas of sudden death, all seemed but quaint and often crude allegories; assemblies were but the occasion of

fun and feasting; men played at the comedy of equality with zest and good temper, just because it was all so impossible and unlike life. And may not autocrats like Frederick the Great and the Emperor of Austria have blindly served the enterprise of the people and have assisted in converting their own comedy into tragedy?

Recruits for the secret service were not difficult to attract. The Lisbon earthquake had unsettled many minds. The theurgists Saint-Germain and Cagliostro flitted hither and thither like brilliant Oriental birds against the neutral background of a Europe at peace but in travail. Eagerly watched and eagerly worshipped, they performed miracles and cures that dazzled the imagination. Their magical shows, displaying sometimes conspicuous charlatanry, amazed the gaping crowds, and served to disguise their primary mission from the Courts and the governing classes.

People of all classes became nervous and disturbed. Suzanne Labrousse of Périgord,* being in chapel, threw herself at the foot of the Crucifix and announced precisely the date of the convocation of the States-General. The Queen

* 1784.

of Prussia and her waiting-women had seen "the white lady." Crowds in the market-place of Leipzig awaited the ghost of wonder-working Schroepfer, who had shown Louis XV. in a magic mirror his successor decapitated ; for had he not promised to reappear to his disciples at a given moment after death ? Interpretations of the Apocalypse were published, and it was asserted that yet more ancient prophecies were about to be fulfilled. Men asked themselves as they met in their lodges and their homes, or as they sat round the pool of Mesmer, or consulted Cazotte, "What would be the end thereof ?" Great changes were in the air ; men felt the fluttering of unseen wings and the breath of unrecognised forces, their expectations kept them restless and eager.

One mind at least in France was able to contemplate with calmness the weaving of strange threads into the texture of society ; and in that mind was clearly reflected the spirit and tendency of the agitated world of action. Undismayed by portent or prophecy, the unknown philosopher meditated as he watched the shuttles darting through the giant loom of the social system, and gazed on that living tissue through

which in the weaving "shimmered unceasingly the irrefragable justice of God." Saint-Martin had already formulated that *ternaire sacré* which many were diligently and in different ways seeking to attain. Men grasped eagerly after the fruit of the travail of his soul and were satisfied. By studying his doctrines their apprehension was quickened and their efforts enhanced and spiritualised. To a great extent he transfused the masonic thought with that faith which makes the movement of mountains no impossibility. The *ternaire* which proved the miraculous seed-corn of the revolutionary harvest had been scattered by him broadcast over the land to germinate in the furrows of France against the reaping-time.

Meanwhile the ambassadors of Weishaupt surveyed the countries which were to be the stage of the great drama. Long before accredited Illuminist agents were sent to instruct the lodges of the Grand Orient, inaugural work seems to have been undertaken by Cagliostro and Saint-Germain. Weishaupt was too shrewd an organiser to neglect any instrument of advantage, and, estimating justly the credulity of the day, he saw the extreme importance of

securing such men as the magicians for the furtherance of his purpose.

One of his emissaries, Cagliostro, was known all over Europe as the "Priest of Mystery," and nearly every one, however sceptical of his powers, fell before his personal charm. The Perfectibilists annexed him and initiated him into their ritual, as he himself describes, in an underground cave near Frankfort-on-the-Main. At the initiation he learnt that the first blows of the Illuminates would be aimed at France, and that after the fall of that monarchy the Church herself would be assailed. After receiving instructions and money from Weishaupt (a secret which he is said later to have confessed to the Inquisition), he proceeded to Strasburg, and there led a life of philanthropy, giving to the poor his money, to the rich his advice, to the sick his help. He was veritably adored by the people. When he went to Paris in 1781 his elegant house in the Rue Saint Claude was soon besieged by admirers. His portrait was in great request on medallions and fans, and his bust in marble and in bronze figured in the houses of the great with this inscription: "Le divin Cagliostro." He received his clients in a large room furnished with Oriental

luxury, which contained the bust of Hippocrates, the "Universal Prayer" of Pope, together with objects of necromantic design and thaumaturgic virtue. His mysterious device L.P.D. (*lilia pedibus destrue*) was reputed to be full of sinister meaning for the kings of France. Marie Antoinette was deeply interested in matters and men of this nature. De Rohan entertained her with tales of Cagliostro; she consulted Saint-Germain, and was one of the visitors who clustered round the mysterious fluid of the hypnotic doctor Mesmer, which was calculated to heal all ills, and who listened to his dictum, "There is but one health, one illness, and one remedy." Though Mesmer's experiments were rejected by the French savants of the day as worthless, they were eagerly taken up in other parts of Europe. Mesmer enforced the law of mutual dependence and of unity in the natural world, as Saint-Martin enforced the laws of mutual dependence and of unity in the spiritual world. It might well have been Saint-Martin and not Mesmer who said, "that the life of man is part of the universal movement," for they were both exponents of the truth of the solidarity of the race.

The Comte de Saint-Germain, another of Weishaupt's ambassadors, emerges at intervals upon the surface of affairs a brilliant and accomplished personage, and sinks again to work in the great secret service, or to sit, as tradition has it, upon his golden altar in an attitude of Oriental absorption. Saint-Germain was probably not only the secret missionary and entertainer of Louis XV., but also the agent of masonic and other societies working for the regeneration of humanity; one life was probably only the cloak for the other.

At the great Convention of Masonry held at Wilhelmsbad in 1782 the Order of the Strict Observance was suspended, and Von Knigge disclosed the scheme of Weishaupt to the assembled representatives of the masonic and mystical fraternities. Then and there disciples of Saint-Martin and of Willermooz, as well as statesmen, scientists, magicians, and magistrates from all countries, were converted to Illuminism. Perfectibilist doctrines percolated everywhere through the lodges of Europe, and when the "Philalèthes," at the instigation of Mirabeau, became the missionary agents of Illuminism, they preached to already half-

converted audiences. The fact that Mirabeau had any connection with such schemes has been occasionally denied, partly on account of the bitter pamphlet he launched against Cagliostro and partly because in "La Monarchie Prussienne" he denounced all secret societies and asserted that they should be tolerated by no State. This proves no more than the work which Nicolai produced explaining that secret societies existed for no other purpose than to serve the Stuart cause, when all the while he was founding a club and gaining possession of newspapers, like the "Berlin Journal" and the "Jena Gazette," to further the views of the initiates. It must be remembered that everything that conduced to the welfare of the society and the furtherance of the mission was justifiable, and that by subterfuges such as these Mirabeau and Nicolai sought to avert suspicion from themselves, and to obtain peace to work with greater efficiency and freedom. Mirabeau, owing to his friendship with Nicolai while in Berlin, is said to have been initiated into the last mysteries of the Perfectibilists at Brunswick. On returning to Paris he, together with Bonneville, introduced the German doctrines at the lodge of the "Amis

Réunis."* Among his auditors were the Duke of Orleans, Brissot, Condorcet, Savalette, Grégoire, Garat, Pétion, Babœuf, Barnave, Sieyès, Saint-Just, Camille Desmoulins, Hébert, Santerre, Danton, Marat, Chénier, and many other men whose names are immortalised in the annals of the Revolution. The charge of actually disseminating the doctrines throughout France was given to Bode (Aurelius) and Busch (Bayard). So well did the Perfectibilist missionaries work that by 1788 every lodge under the Grand Orient—and they numbered in that year 629—is said to have been indoctrinated with the system of Weishaupt.

From the time or the inoculation of the Grand Orient of France with the German doctrines, masonry, from being a simple instrument of tolerance, humanity, and fraternity, acting in a vague and general manner on the sentiments of its adherents, became a direct instrument of social transformation. Plans of the most practical nature were discussed. A scheme for recruiting a citizen army was drawn up, and Savalette de Lange, of the royal household, is said to have been responsible for

* "Le Couteulx de Canteleu," p. 168.

its execution. At the opening of the Revolution he appeared before the municipal councillors of Paris, followed by a few men crying, "Let us save the country," thereby exciting no little emulation. "Messieurs," he said :

"Voici des citoyens que j'ai exercés à manier les armes pour la défense de la patrie; je me suis point fait leur majeur ou leur général, nous sommes tous égaux, je suis simplement caporal, mais j'ai donné l'exemple; ordonnez que tous les citoyens le suivent, que la nation prenne les armes, et la liberté est invincible."*

The next day the army of the "gardes nationaux" was formed. Barruel relates that at the outbreak of the Revolution two million hands, holding pikes, torches and hatchets, were ready to serve the cause of humanity, and that this body of zealots had been created by the adepts. Whether this be a true estimate or not, many an arm which was ready in 1789 to strike a blow for liberty had been nerved by the teachings of the secret societies.

Nearly all the masonic and illuminist lodges

* "Le Couteulx de Canteleu," p. 211.

shrank to their smallest esoteric dimensions in 1789, and expanded exoterically as clubs and popular societies. La Loge des Neuf Sœurs, for example, became "La Société Nationale des Neuf Sœurs," a club admitting women. The Grand Orient ceased its direction of affairs. The old theoretical discussions within the lodges as to how the Revolution should be conducted, produced in action the widest divergences, and Jacobins, Girondins, Hébertists, Dantonists, Robespierrists, in consequence destroyed each other.

It has been the habit for so long to regard the Revolution as an undefined catastrophe that it is hardly possible to persuade men that at least some foreknowledge of its course and destination existed in the mind of the Illuminists. When Cagliostro wrote his celebrated letter from England in 1787 predicting for the French people the realisation of the schemes of the secret societies; foretelling the Revolution and the destruction of the Bastille and monarchy; the advent of a Prince Égalité, who would abolish *lettres de cachet;* the convocation of the States-General; the destruction of ecclesiasticism and the substitution of the religion of

Reason; he probably wrote of the things he had heard debated in the lodges of Paris. Prescience might also explain the remark attributed to Mirabeau, "Voilà la victime," as he indicated the King at the opening of the States-General at Versailles.* Two volumes of addresses, delivered at various lodges by eminent masons, prove how truly the situation had been gauged by Condorcet and Mirabeau. In fantastic phraseology the philosopher announced at Strasbourg that in France the "idolatry of monarchy had received a death-blow from the daughters of the Order of the Templars," while the statesman uttered in the recesses of the lodge of the "Chevaliers Bienfaisants" in Paris, the levelling principles and liberal ideas which he afterwards thundered from the tribune of the Assembly.† The path to the overthrow of religious authority had to a great extent been made smooth by the distribution, through the lodges, of Boulanger's "Origines du Despotisme Oriental," in which religion is treated as the engine of the State and the source of despotic power. "Des Erreurs et de la Vérité," springing as it did out

* "Mémoires de Weber," vol. i. chap. ix. p. 335.

† p. 41. Robison.

of the self-consciousness of the philosopher of the Revolution, represents, more than any other book, the feeling of the mystical aspirants after a reign of brotherhood and love. It became the Talmud of such people and the classic whence they drew their opinions. Religions? their very diversity condemns them. Governments? their instability, their foolish ways prove how false is the base on which they rest. All is wrong, especially criminal law, for it upholds the monstrous injustice of not only killing guilt but also repentance. Saint-Martin spoke to eager ears when he spoke thus to men, men willing to believe that man alone has created evil, that God at least must be exonerated from so monstrous a charge, men willing to work for that reign of brotherhood which meant the restoration of man's lost happiness. A very curious symbol is preserved in the National Library in Paris which illustrates the decline of the sentiment and principle and faith wherein the Revolution originated. It consists of a medal struck under the Convention in which two men regard each other without demonstration of affection, and all around runs the inscription: "Sois mon frère ou je te

tue." The doctrine of brotherhood can no further go.

After considering presently available materials we must conclude that at the lowest estimate a co-ordinated working basis of ideas had been established through the agency of the lodges of France; that thousands of men, unable to form a political opinion or judgment for themselves, had been awakened to a sense of their own responsibility and their own power in furthering the great movement towards a new order of affairs. It remains to the eternal credit of the workers in the great secret service to have elicited a vigorous personal response to the call of great ideals, and to have directed the enthusiasm excited to the welfare, not of individuals, but of society as a whole. The conjectural realm of the inception of political ideas is a morass into which few historians care to venture. Proved paths are lacking, the country is dark and unmapped, and a false step may ruin the reputation of years. It is to be hoped that one day a contribution to the spiritual history of the eighteenth century will be made which will neither ignore the utopian confederacies nor attribute to them, as is the

habit of ecclesiastics, influences altogether malign.

At the great Revolution the doctrines of the lodges were at last translated from the silent world of secrecy to the common world of practice; a few months sufficed to depose ecclesiasticism from its pedestal and monarchy from its throne; to make the army republican, and the word of Rousseau law. The half-mystical phantasies of the lodges became the habits of daily life. The Phrygian cap of the "illuminate" became the headgear of the populace, and the adoption of the classic appellations used by Spartacus and his Areopagites the earnest of good citizenship. Past time was broken with, and a calendar modelled on those in use among the secret confederates became the symbol of the new epoch. The *ternaire*—Liberty, Equality, Fraternity—instead of merely adorning the meeting-places of masonic bodies, was stencilled on all the public buildings of France; and the red banner which had symbolised universal love within the lodges was carried by the ragged battalions of the people on errands of pillage and destruction.

The great subversive work had been silently

and ruthlessly accomplished in the face of popes and kings. Though the Church spread the report that Illuminates worshipped a devil, and named it Christ, and denounced masonry as the "mystery of iniquity"; though Saint-Germain and Saint-Martin were decried by the Jesuits; though Cagliostro died in the Inquisitors' prison of Sant'Angelo, and Cazotte, Égalité, and many another agent of the secret service were guillotined; though Weishaupt was persecuted and the German Perfectibilists suppressed; yet the mine which had been dug under altar and throne was too deep to be filled up by either persecution or calumny.

The true history of the eighteenth century is the history of the aspiration of the human race. In France it was epitomised. The spiritual life of that nation, which was to lift the weight of material oppression from the shoulders of multitudes, had been cherished through dark years by the preachers of Freedom, Equality, and Brotherhood. From the Swedenborgian stronghold of Avignon, from Martinist Lyons, from Narbonne, from Munich, and many another citadel of freedom, there flashed on the grey night of feudalism, unseen

but to the initiates, the watch-fires of great hope tended by those priests of progress who, though unable to lift the veil that shrouds the destiny of man and the end of worlds, by faith were empowered to dedicate the future to the Unknown God.

THE COMTE DE SAINT-GERMAIN

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THE lives of notable people do not often baffle biographers by their mystery, yet any attempt to arrange the incidents of Saint-Germain's life upon paper has proved to be as futile and unsatisfactory as the effort to piece together a puzzle of which some of the principal parts were missing. Neither contemporary memoir-writers nor private friends have laid bare the real business or ambition of the elegant figure who was admired for so many years of the eighteenth century in Europe as "der Wundermann." The things known about him are many, but they are outnumbered by the things that are not known. It is known, for example, that he was employed in the secret service of Louis the Fifteenth; that he played the violin; wrote concertos and songs which are still extant; was chemist, linguist, illuminate, and adept; but his name, his nationality, his means of subsistence, his object in travelling and in intercourse with his fellow

creatures are not known, and no one yet has made more than plausible suggestions as to the relation his accomplishments and activities bore to the central purpose of his life. He has been called an adventurer, but though discredit is reflected on him by the word it throws no particular light on his career. Scepticism and credulity walked hand in hand in the eighteenth century, as they do to-day, and many persons who had cast off the forms of traditional religion were ready to accord unquestioning reverence to men who claimed or evidenced the possession of supernatural powers, and it is probable that Saint-Germain made use of this state of affairs to prosecute his own designs.

It is interesting to remember that while Voltaire, with his searchlight mind, was illuminating the darker aspects of ecclesiasticism, while Boulanger and Beccaria were engaging their keen intellects in unmasking the whole foundation and structure of superstition, Cagliostro was dazzling the people by magical experiments, Cassanova was mystifying audiences, Schroepfer professing, by means of his famous mirror, to evoke spirits, and Cazotte practising the art of prophecy. Though the

contrast is curious it is not unnatural, for there must always be many people in the world who are oppressed with the sense of imprisonment, and who are grateful to those enchanters who lift men, however it may be, out of the hard and fast limitations of this mortal life into a sphere where limitations have no existence and where all things become possible. In this sense of freedom and potentiality lie the charm and interest of those strange lives that have baffled scrutiny.

It is so rare for a human life to embody in action that imaginative quality which attracts us in poetry and art, that suggestiveness which gives the feeling of hidden power and fulness. The struggle to work and the effort to succeed are generally visible; the capacity is nearly always to be gauged; and the individual may usually be summed up as a bundle of qualities producing certain results. Lives in which imagination seems to rule all action, thought, and speech are almost unknown, and careers in which the boundaries of daily life are no longer felt must appeal to those who, either by circumstance or personality, are debarred from ever themselves realising the illusion of freedom.

A world of new diversion is created for us by such adventurings as those of Saint-Germain, and though in the future the enigma of his life may be solved by some laborious student, at present it is fraught with all the qualities of romance. Now and again the curtain which shrouds his actions is drawn aside, and we are permitted to see him fiddling in the music room at Versailles, gossiping with Horace Walpole in London, sitting in Frederick the Great's library at Berlin, or conducting Illuminist meetings in caverns by the Rhine. But the curtain is often down, and it is only by a process of induction that the isolated scenes can be strung together into an intelligible drama of existence.

The travels of the Comte de Saint-Germain covered a long period of years and a great range of countries. From Persia to France and from Calcutta to Rome he was known and respected. Horace Walpole spoke with him in London in 1745; Clive knew him in India in 1756; Madame d'Adhémar alleges that she met him in Paris in 1789, five years after his supposed death: while other persons pretend to have held conversations with him in the early nineteenth century. He was on familiar and inti-

mate terms with the crowned heads of Europe, and the honoured friend of many distinguished persons of all nationalities. He is often mentioned in the memoirs and letters of the day, and always as a man of mystery. Frederick the Great, Voltaire, Madame de Pompadour, Rousseau, Chatham, and Walpole, who all knew him personally, rivalled each other in curiosity as to his origin. No one, during the many decades in which he was before the world, succeeded, however, in discovering why he appeared as a Jacobite agent in London, as a conspirator in Petersburg, as an alchemist and connoisseur of pictures in Paris, or as a Russian General at Naples.

People agreed, and this in a day when a high value was set upon manners and evidence of breeding, that Saint-Germain was well born. His grace of bearing and ease in all society were charming. Thiébault says: "In appearance Saint-Germain was refined and intellectual. He was clearly of gentle birth and had moved in good society . . . he was a wise and prudent man who never wilfully offended against the code of honour or did anything that might offend our sense of probity." When in Paris

his portrait was painted for the Marquis d'Urfé, and from this picture was made an engraving on copper by N. Thomas, of Paris (1783). The intelligent and rather whimsical young face set above the delicate shoulders gives the idea that Saint-Germain was but a little man. The portrait is labelled "Marquis de S. Germain, der Wundermann." It was dedicated to to the Comte de Milly, and beneath it was inscribed this verse :

Ainsi que Prométhée il déroba le feu
Par qui le monde existe et par qui tout respire ;
La nature à sa voix obéit et se meurt.
S'il n'est pas Dieu lui-même un Dieu puissant l'inspire.

Though men agreed about his grace of manner they disagreed as to theories of his origin, and this may be partly owing to the fact that he chose to live under so many assumed names. In Paris, the Hague, London, and Petersburg he was the Comte de Saint-Germain; in Genoa and Leghorn, Count Soltykoff; in Venice, Count Bellamare or Aymar; in Milan and Leipzig, Chevalier Weldon; in Schwalbach and Triesdag, Czarogy, which he pointed out was but the anagram for the family from which he really sprang—Ragoczy. He told Prince

Charles of Hesse that he was the son of Prince Ragoczy, and that he had assumed the name of Saint-Germain to please himself. He knew a good deal about Italy, and Madame de Pompadour detected an Italian accent in all he said, and so thought him of Italian birth; but this might be accounted for if he really was educated at the University of Siena. The evidence for this is slight, but there is no suggestion that he was educated elsewhere, and Madame de Genlis says that she heard men talk of him as a student there during a visit paid to that town. Another theory is that he was the son of a cloth merchant in Moscow, and that his father's business accounted for his unfailing supply of gold. The theory of his Russian descent is supported by the fact that he talked Russian fluently; by the secret instructions of Choiseul to Pitt (1760) to have the Count arrested as a Russian spy; as well as by his having been concerned in the Orloff conspiracy to dethrone the Czar Peter and to set up Catherine the Second in his place.

He is said to have been born in the same year as Louis the Fifteenth (1710), but this is a matter of no moment, as it would not help men to understand Saint-Germain any the

better to have his baptismal certificate in their hands, and it is enough to know that he lived and was well known in Europe from 1742 to 1782 as a man of young and interesting appearance. Queen Christina of Sweden made a wise observation when she said : " There is no other youth but vigour of soul and body ; every one who has this vigour is young, no matter if he be a hundred years old, and every one who has it not is old, no matter if his years number but eighteen." All who came in contact with Saint-Germain noticed that he possessed this vigour and alertness of body and soul to a remarkable extent. People thought he lived by virtue of some charm, for he was never known to eat in public, to confess to illness or fatigue, or to grow perceptibly older in looks.

From 1737 to 1742 he was in Asia, at the Court of the Shah of Persia for a while, afterwards learning the mysticism and philosophy of the Orient in secluded mountain monasteries. It was said that he became an adept, and there is no doubt that he was in possession of secrets and knowledge with which the majority of men are unacquainted. His study of Oriental languages was profound, his love of the East a

passion, and on his return to Europe a rumour circulated that near Aix he had constructed a retreat where, sitting on a golden altar in the attitude of the conventional Buddha, he passed periods of intense contemplation. In 1743 he came to England, and apparently lived in London in a quiet way, writing music, playing the violin, and industriously working in Jacobite plots. As an active Freemason he would quite naturally have been employed in this fashion. Legitimists, it will be remembered, had been the means of introducing the English School of Masonry into France, and Saint-Germain had affiliated himself early to one of the first of the Anglo-French lodges. To be both Jacobite and Jacobin was no impossibility, for the one activity grew in many instances out of the other. The Count was often in direct communication with the Pretender, but when arrested on suspicion of being concerned in attempts to restore the Stuart dynasty no incriminating papers were found in his possession, and he was at once released.

Horace Walpole says :

" The other day they seized an odd man, the

Count Saint-Germain. He has been here these two years and will not tell who he is or whence, but professes . . . that he does not go by his right name. . . . He sings and plays on the violin wonderfully, composes, is mad, and not very sensible. He is called an Italian, a Spaniard, a Pole; a somebody that married a great fortune in Mexico and ran away with her jewels to Constantinople; a priest, a fiddler, a vast nobleman. The Prince of Wales has had an unsated curiosity about him, but in vain. However nothing has been made out against him; he is released; and what convinces me that he is not a gentleman, stays here, and talks of his being taken up for a spy." *

He left a musical record behind him to remind English people of his sojourn in this country. Many of his compositions were published by Walsh, in Catherine Street, Strand, and his earliest English song, "Oh, wouldst thou know what sacred charms," came out while he was still on his first visit to London; but on quitting this city he entrusted certain other settings of words to Walsh, such as "Jove, when he saw," and

* "Letters of Horace Walpole," vol. ii. p. 161.

the arias out of his little opera "L'Inconstanza Delusa," both of which compositions were published during his absence from England. When he returned, in 1760, he gave the world a great many new songs, followed in 1780 by a set of solos for the violin. He was an industrious and capable artist, and attracted a great deal of fashionable attention to himself both as composer and executant.

"With regard to music, he not only played but composed; and both in a high taste. Nay, his very ideas were accommodated to the art; and in those occurrences which had no relation to music he found means to express himself in figurative terms deduced from this science. There could not be a more artful way of showing his attention to the subject. I remember an incident which impressed it strongly on my memory. I had the honour to be at an assembly of Lady ——, who to many other good and great accomplishments added a taste for music so delicate that she was made a judge in the dispute of masters. This stranger was to be of the party; and towards evening he came in his usual free and polite

manner, but with more hurry than was customary, and with his fingers stopped in his ears. I can conceive easily that in most men this would have been a very ungraceful attitude, and I am afraid it would have been construed into an ungenteel entrance; but he had a manner that made everything agreeable. They had been emptying a cartload of stones just at the door, to mend the pavement: he threw himself into a chair and, when the lady asked what was the matter, he pointed to the place and said, 'I am stunned with a whole cartload of discords.'" *

According to Madame de Pompadour Saint-Germain made his first appearance in France in 1749. Louis the Fifteenth thought him an entertaining and agreeable addition to his Court, and listened to his stories of adventures in every land and his gossip on the most intimate affairs of the European chanceries with delight. No one at the Court knew anything about the Count's history, but he seems to have made the chance acquaintance of Belle Isle and by him to have been introduced to Madame de Pompadour.

* "London Chronicle," June 1760.

A judicious bestowal of gifts quickly ingratiated him with his new patrons. He gave pictures by Velasquez and Murillo to Louis XV., and to the "Marquise" gems of great value. His many accomplishments diverted the King. Sometimes he showed off his retentive memory by repeating pages of print after one reading; sometimes he played the violin; and sometimes he sang; sometimes he wrote with both hands at once, and proved that the compartments of his brain worked independently by inscribing a love letter and a set of verses simultaneously. The only poem of that date attributed to him which is still extant is a mystical sonnet:

Curieux scrutateur de la Nature entière,
J'ai connu du grand tout le principe et la fin.
J'ai vu l'or en puissance au fond de sa rivière,
J'ai saisi sa matière et surpris son levain.

J'expliquai par quel art l'âme aux flancs d'une mère
Fait sa maison, l'emporte, et comment un pépin
Mis contre un grain de blé, sous l'humide poussière;
L'un plante et l'autre cep, sont le pain et le vin.

Rien n'était, Dieu voulant, rien devint quelque chose,
J'en doutais, je cherchai sur quoi l'univers pose.
Rien gardait l'équilibre et servait de soutien.

Enfin avec le poids de l'éloge et du blâme
Je pesai l'éternel ; il appella mon âme :
Je mourrai, j'adorai, je ne savais plus rien.*

Saint-Germain was credited with the possession of alchemical secrets, and he was said to practise the crystallisation of carbon. Madame de Hausset, who was as credulous as most of the Court ladies of that day, tells how Louis XV. showed the Count a large diamond with a flaw, remarking that it would be worth double if it were flawless. The alchemist promptly offered, in four weeks' time, to make it so, and begged that a jeweller might be summoned to act as judge in the matter. At the appointed time the jeweller, who had valued the diamond at 6000 francs in the first instance, offered the King 10,000 francs for the improved stone. Count Cobenzl was present at "the transmutation of iron into a metal as beautiful as gold, and at least as good for all goldsmith's work." Every one seemed to be convinced by ocular demonstration of the truth of Saint-Germain's pretensions, and when Quesnay dared

* "Poèmes Philosophiques sur l'Homme." Chez Mercier, Paris. 1795.

to call him a quack he was severely reprimanded by the King.

Whatever we may think to-day of Saint-Germain's claims to be an alchemist we cannot doubt that he was a working chemist, for Madame de Genlis says: "He was well acquainted with physics and a very great chemist. My father, who was well qualified to judge, was a great admirer of his abilities in this respect." She also narrates that he painted pictures in wonderful colours, from which he got "unprecedented effects." It seems just possible that he may in some way have anticipated the discovery of Unverdorben and the practice of Perkins with regard to aniline dyes, for he produced brilliant results without the agency of either cochineal or indigo. Kaunitz, who in 1755 negotiated the pact between Vienna and Versailles, received a letter from his fellow countryman Cobenzl expressing astonishment at Saint-Germain's discoveries and telling of experiments made in dyeing skins and other substances under his own eyes. The treatment of skins he asserted "was carried to a perfection which surpassed all the moroccos in the world; the dyeing of silks was perfected

to a degree hitherto unknown; likewise the dyeing of woollens; wood was dyed in the most brilliant colours which penetrated through and through the whole. All this was accomplished without the aid of indigo or cochineal, but with the commonest ingredients and consequently at a very moderate price. He composed colours for painting, making ultramarine as perfect as if made from lapis-lazuli; and he could destroy the smell of painting oils, and make the best oil of Provence from the oils of Navette, of Cobat, and from other oils even worse. I have in my hand all these productions made under my own eyes."

Saint-Germain always attributed his knowledge of occult chemistry to his sojourn in Asia. In 1755 he went to the East again for the second time, and writing to Count von Lamberg he said, "I am indebted for my knowledge of melting jewels to my second journey to India. On my first expedition I had but a very faint idea of this wonderful secret, and all the experiments I made in Vienna, Paris, and London were as such worthless."

This journey to India was probably under-

taken at the instance of Louis XV., who for some years employed Saint-Germain as a secret agent. The Count says that he travelled out in the same ship as General Clive, under the command of Vice-Admiral Watson, in what capacity he does not inform us, but it may have been as ship's doctor. After learning all he could of the English schemes for the subjugation of India he returned to Europe in the year in which Calcutta was retaken and the battle of Plassy fought. Going straight to his employer in Paris he was immediately installed as a mark of royal favour in a suite of rooms at Chambord.

Books have been written on the secret service organised by the Duc de Broglie for Louis XV., and many of the letters to the emissaries employed have been published. Either the King or De Broglie had an unusual gift for discerning men that were likely to serve them well in such undertakings. The notorious Chevalier d'Eon was commissioned as a secret agent to Russia before he entered the official diplomatic service, and it will be remembered that he remained for some months as "lectrice" to Catherine II. before

he was ordered to reassume man's dress and figure as secretary of embassy at Petersburg. Saint-Germain was employed on many private missions by Louis XV., who both trusted his discretion and admired his wit. His apparent contempt for his fellow creatures pleased the King. "To entertain any esteem for men, Sire, one must be neither a confessor, a minister, nor a police officer," he one day remarked. "You may as well add, Comte," replied Louis XV., "a king."

Sated with pleasure and bored with a life in which no wish, however faint, remained ungratified, Louis XV. found great entertainment after Cardinal Fleury's death in being his own minister for foreign affairs. He had been brought up to trust no one, and it gave him a sense of security and power to have within his hands a means of checking his accredited State officials. In consequence of the way in which his secret service was organised the King was often in possession of news earlier than his ministers, and could hardly refrain from cynical laughter when belated information was tendered by them to him on matters of which he was already cognisant. Negotiations for peace and alliance were essayed in various countries; men

were unofficially sounded, public sentiment quietly gauged, opinions dexterously extracted, in such a way that when open and official action was taken the King could predict in an omniscient manner the outcome of affairs.

It is necessarily difficult to track the footsteps of any secret agent, and except for occasional glimpses caught of Saint-Germain during the Seven Years' War through the despatches of generals we cannot know much of his doings. He was anxious that France should make an alliance with Prussia, and it will be remembered that at this time there were two policies pulling against each other at the French Court—that of Choiseul, whose first act as Prime Minister was to ratify the treaty of peace with Maria Theresa (1758) made by his predecessor Bernis (1756), and that of the Belle-Isles, who were incessantly intriguing to get a special covenant made with Prussia, and so to break up the alliance between France and Austria, on which the credit of Choiseul rested. This special treaty was, after a while, drawn up, and Saint-Germain, who received the document in cypher from the King's own hand, was despatched to discuss the negotiation with

Frederick the Great. Choiseul, though he was unaware of this transaction, was naturally angry at the favour shown to Saint-Germain by his master, and determined to compass his downfall, and he did not regret the antics of a young Englishman, Lord Gower, at that time resident in Paris, who posed as "der Wundermann," boasting that he had been present at the Council of Trent, and had the secret of immortality, as well as doing all kinds of ridiculous things which indirectly brought discredit on Saint-Germain. It seems possible that some knowledge of the Count's mission to the Prussian King may have leaked out, for Voltaire, in a letter to that monarch, said :

"Your ministers doubtless are likely to have a better look-out at Breda than I : Choiseul, Kaunitz, and Pitt do not tell me their secret. It is said to be only known by Saint-Germain, who supped formerly at Trenta with the Council Fathers, and who will probably have the honour of seeing your Majesty in the course of fifty years. He is a man who never dies and who knows everything."

Saint-Germain greatly disturbed the peace of

mind of foreign generals and ministers, who became uneasy and suspicious when he discussed affairs with them, for no one knew how far the Count was empowered by the French King to treat of State business. A secret agent, after all, may at any moment be disavowed, and must always be viewed by the official world in the light of a spy. General Yorke, who was commanding the English forces in this campaign, wrote to his chief, Lord Holdernesse, several times on the subject of Saint-Germain, and it seems possible from the nature of Lord Holdernesse's reply that they may have had information in England as to Saint-Germain's real position with the King. Writing from the Hague in March 1760, General Yorke says :

" Your lordship knows the history of that extraordinary man known by the name of Count Saint-Germain, who resided some time in England, where he did nothing ; and has within these two or three years resided in France, where he has been upon the most familiar footing with the French King, Madame de Pompadour, Monsieur de Belle-Isle, &c. ; which has procured him a grant of the Royal Castle of

Chambord, and has enabled him to make a certain figure in that country. He appeared for some days at Amsterdam, where he was much caressed and talked of, and upon the marriage of Princess Caroline he alighted at the Hague. The same curiosity created the same attention to him here. . . . Monsieur d'Affry treats him with respect and attention, but is very jealous of him, and did not so much as renew my acquaintance with him." *

Saint-Germain discussed the possibilities of peace with General Yorke, but when the Englishman showed himself secretive and undesirous of committing himself to a confidential talk the Count produced two letters from Belle-Isle by way of credentials. In these letters the English general remarked that great praise was bestowed on Saint-Germain. The Count told Yorke that the King, the Dauphin, Madame de Pompadour, and the Court desired peace with England, and that the only two ministers who wished to avoid this consummation were Choiseul and Bernis. Yorke did not enjoy confiding in Saint-Germain,

* Lord Holdernesse's Despatches, 1760. 6818 plut. P.L. clxviii. 1 (12). "Mitchell Papers," vol. xv.

and talked but in vague and general terms in reply to his advances. Lord Holdernesse approved this caution, but said that His Majesty (George II.) did not think it unlikely that Saint-Germain might have real authorisation to talk as he has done, but that General Yorke should be reminded that he cannot be disavowed by his Government, as Saint-Germain may be whenever it pleases Louis XV. so to do.

Choiseul, rather naturally, did not like being undermined by Louis XV.'s secret agents, and was especially incensed over Saint-Germain's action at the Hague. He went so far as to write to the official French representative, D'Affry, to order him to demand the States-General to give up Saint-Germain, and that being done to bind him hand and foot and send him to the Bastille. D'Affry meanwhile had written to Choiseul a despatch bitterly reproaching him for allowing a peace to be negotiated under his very eyes at the Hague, without informing him of it. This despatch Choiseul read in Council, after which he repeated his own instructions to D'Affry on the extradition of Saint-Germain, and said, looking at Louis XV. and Belle-Isle : "If I did not give myself time

to take the orders of the King it is because I am convinced that no one here would be rash enough to negotiate a treaty of peace without the knowledge of your Majesty's Minister for Foreign Affairs."

Other diplomats who met Saint-Germain at the Hague also wrote to the Foreign Secretaries of their respective countries for instructions. It was so puzzling to them and to every one else that M. d'Affry should at first have welcomed Saint-Germain and then have nothing to say to him, and that Choiseul should go out of his way to discredit him by demanding his arrest. Bentinck, the President of the Deputy Commissioners of the Province of Holland, who was most friendly with Saint-Germain, was extremely grieved that a plea for his arrest should have been laid before the States-General by M. d'Affry at the instance of the French Government, and immediately assisted the Count to escape from the Hague. A few days after Saint-Germain had started for England M. d'Affry was recalled by his Court.

Kauderbach wrote to Prince Galitzin on the matter:

"A certain Count Saint-Germain has appeared

here lately (the Hague), and been the subject of much discourse, from his being suspected of having some private commission relating to the peace. He pretended to be very intimate with Madame Pompadour and in great favour with the King. At first he was much taken notice of by M. d'Affry; and had insinuated himself into families of fashion, both here and at Amsterdam. But within these few days M. d'Affry has been with the Pensionary and with me, and has showed us a letter from M. de Choiseul, in which he says that the King had heard of Saint-Germain's conduct with indignation; that he was a vagabond, a cheat, and a worthless fellow, and that the King ordered him (M. d'Affry) to demand him of Their High Mightinesses, and to desire that he may be arrested and sent immediately to Lisle, in order to his being brought from thence and confined in France. The gentleman having got some ground to suspect what was preparing for him, went off, and it is thought he is gone to England, where he may probably open some new scene." *

* The Hague, April 18, 1760. Series Foreign Ambassadors (Intercepted). Extract from copy of letter from M. Kauderbach to Prince Galitzin, received April 22, 1760.

Later on in the same day Kauderbach discovered that Bentinck had assisted him to escape, that he was with Saint-Germain till one hour past midnight one morning, and that four hours later a carriage with four horses came to convey the Count to Helvoet Sluys. He further wishes Galitzin joy of the adventurer.

"I think him at the end of his resources. He has pawned coloured stones here, such as opals, sapphires, emeralds, and rubies, and this is the man who pretends he can convert mountains into gold who has lived like this at the Hague! He lies in a scandalous way, and he tried to convince us that he had completely cured a man who had cut off his thumb. He picked up the thumb thirty yards away from its owner and stuck it on again with strong glue, *ex ungue leonem*. I have seen the papers by which he pretends he is authorised to be confidential negotiator; they consist of a passport from the King of France and two letters from Marshal Belle-Isle, which, after all, stand for nothing, as the Marshal is always corresponding with the most vile newsmongers."

Kauderbach's opinion was not held by every

one, for Saint-Germain had greatly impressed a Dutch nobleman, who was beyond measure distressed at his sudden departure from the Hague. Writing to England Count de la "Watn" said, "I know that you are the greatest man on earth, and I am mortified that these wretched people annoy you and intrigue against your peace-making efforts. . . . I hear that M. d'Affry has been unexpectedly summoned by his Court. I only hope he may get what he deserves." Saint-Germain meanwhile went to England, where he suffered arrest. "His examination has produced nothing very material," wrote Lord Holdernesse to Mitchell, the British envoy in Prussia, but he still thought it advisable for the Count to leave England. This he apparently did not do, for the London papers of June 1760 tell stories of his behaviour and make guesses as to his origin and mission.

"Whatever may have been the business of a certain foreigner here about whom the French have just made or have affected to make a great bustle, there is something in his most unintelligible history that is very entertaining; and there are accounts of transactions which

bound so nearly upon the marvellous that it is impossible but that they must excite the attention of this Athenian age. I imagine this gentleman, against whom no ill was ever alleged, and for whose genius and knowledge I have the most sincere respect, will not take umbrage at my observing that the high title he assumes is not the right of lineage or the gift of royal favour ; what is his real name is perhaps one of those mysteries which at his death will surprise the world more than all the strange incidents of his life ; but himself will not be averse, I think, to own this, by which he goes, is no more than a travelling title.

"There seems something insulting in the term *un inconnu*, by which the French have spoken of him; and the terms we have borrowed from their language of an *aventurier* and a *chevalier d'industrie* always convey reproach, as they have been applied to this—I had almost said nobleman. It is justice to declare that in any ill sense they appear to be very foreign from his character. It is certain that, like the persons generally understood by these denominations, he has supported himself always at a considerable expense, and in perfect independence, with-

out any visible or known way of living ; but let those who say this always add that he does not play ; nor is there perhaps a person in the world who can say he has enriched himself sixpence at his expense.

" The country of this stranger is as perfectly unknown as his name ; but concerning both, as also of his early life, busy conjecture has taken the place of knowledge ; and as it was equal what to invent, the perverseness of human nature and perhaps envy in those who took the charge of the invention has led them to select passages less favourable than would have been furnished by truth. Till more authentic materials shall have been produced it will be proper that the world suspend their curiosity, and charity requires not to believe some things which have no foundation.

" All we can with justice say is : This gentleman is to be considered as an unknown and inoffensive stranger, who has supplies for a large expence, the sources of which are not understood.

" Many years ago he was in England, and since that time has visited the several other European kingdoms, always keeping up the

appearance of a man of fashion, and always living with credit.

"The reader who remembers Gil Blas's master who spent his money without anybody's understanding how he lived, 'tis applicable in more respects than one to this stranger, who, like him, has been examined also in dangerous times, but found innocent and respectable. But there is this difference, that the hero of our story seems to have his money concentrated, as chymists keep their powerful menstruums, not in its natural and bulky form, for no carts used to come loaded to his lodgings.

"He had the address to find the reigning foible always of the place where he was going to reside, and on that he built the scheme of rendering himself agreeable. When he came here and he found music was the hobby of this country, and took the fiddle with as good grace as if he had been a native player in whom true *virtù* reigns; and there he appeared a connoisseur in gems, antiques, and medals; in France he was a fop, in Germany a chymist.

"By these arts he introduced himself in each of those countries, and to his high praise it must be owned that to whichever of them or to what-

soever else it may have been that he was bred, yet whichever he chose for the time seemed to have been the only employment of his life.

"'Twas thus in all the rest; among the Germans, where he played chymistry, he was every inch a chymist; and he was certainly in Paris every inch a fop. From Germany he carried into France the reputation of a high and sovereign alchymist, who possessed the secret powder, and in consequence the universal medicine. The whisper ran the stranger could make gold. The expence at which he lived seemed to confirm that account; but the minister at that time, to whom the matter had been whispered as important, smiling answered he would put it on a short issue. He ordered an enquiry to be made whence the remittances he received came, and told those who had applied to him that he would soon show them what quarries they were which yielded this philosopher's stone. The means that great man took to explain the mystery, though very judicious, served only to increase it; whether the stranger had accounts of the enquiry that was ordered and found means to evade it, and by what other accident 'tis not known, but the fact is that in the space

of two years, while he was thus watched, he lived as usual, paid for everything in ready money, and yet no remittance came into the kingdom for him.

"The thing was spoken of and none now doubted what at first had been treated as a chimera; he was understood to possess, with the other grand secret, a remedy for all diseases, and even for the infirmities in which time triumphs over the human fabric." *

One diplomat, who was as curious as every one else in London, wrote home to say that the Count frequented the houses of "the best families in England," that he was "well-dressed, modest, and never ran into debt." Another secretary of embassy, Von Edelsheim, received a letter from his master, Frederick the Great,† commenting on the political phenomenon—"a man whom no one has been able to understand, a man so high in favour with the French King that he had thought of presenting him with the Palace of Chambord." The secret, if secret

* Anecdotes of a Mysterious Stranger, "London Chronicle," May 31 to June 3, 1760.

† Dated from Freyberg. "Œuvres posthumes de Fréd. II., Roi de Prusse," vol. iii. p. 73. Berlin 1783.

there was, of Saint-Germain's life was well kept, for no one knew more about him in London after he had been there several months than they did when he arrived. When his business in England was over he went to France, and in the following year the Marquis d'Urfé met him in the Bois de Boulogne. From Paris he went to Petersburg to help the daughter of his old friend Princess Anhalt-Zerbst to mount the throne of Russia. This daughter, Catherine, had for seventeen miserable years been married to a drunken and dissolute husband, who, on the death of his aunt, the Tsarina Elizabeth, in 1762, became the Tsar Peter. In this year his wife, together with the Orloffs and Saint-Germain, planned his overthrow. The Royal guards were incited to revolt; Peter was coerced into abdication; the priests were won over and were persuaded to anoint Catherine as proxy for her son. The Orloffs completed the *coup d'état* by strangling Peter and proclaiming Catherine Empress in her own right. Gregor Orloff, who was the Tsarina's lover, told the Margrave of Brandenburg-Anspach how large a part in this revolution Saint-Germain played. Catherine II. lived to enjoy the throne she had seized

for twenty-nine years (1762–91), and during at least the earlier portion of that time she gave her protection to the masonic and Illuminist societies founded by Saint-Germain and his accomplices within her realm, though later she turned violently against them. From Petersburg the Count went to Brussels, where he spent Christmas 1762. Cobenzl, who renewed acquaintance with him about this time, found him "the most singular man" he had ever known, and announced that he believed him to be "the son of a clandestine union in a powerful and illustrious family. Possessed of great wealth, he lives in the greatest simplicity; he knows everything and shows an uprightness and a goodness of soul worthy of admiration." Cobenzl was particularly interested in Saint-Germain's chemical experiments, and longed to put some of his inventions to practical money-making uses. He begged the Count to set up an industry at Tournay, and recommended him to a "good and trustworthy merchant" there of his acquaintance. His friend, who at that time was known as M. de Zurmont, acceded to his request and set up a factory where a dyeing business was carried on with profitable results.

While Saint-Germain was living at Tournay Casanova arrived at the town, and being informed of the presence of the Count within it desired to be presented to him. On being told that M. de Zurmont received no one he wrote to request an interview, which was granted on the condition that Casanova should come *incognito*, and that he should not expect to be invited to partake of food. The Count, who was dressed during this interview in Armenian clothes, and who wore a long beard, talked much of his factory and of the interest which Graf Cobenzl took in the experiment.

Madame de Pompadour during her life had extended both to Saint-Germain and Casanova a protective and kindly patronage, and at her death Saint-Germain disappeared from France for four years. During this disappearance from obvious life he was most probably carrying out those larger activities to which his whole being was devoted. The founding of new masonic lodges, the initiation of illuminates, the organisation of fresh groups in different parts of Europe, as well as the share he took in Weishaupt's great scheme for the amalgamation of secret societies, kept him constantly occupied

and continuously travelling. His advantages as an illuminate agent were enormous, and he could work more effectively for the emancipation of man from the ancient tyrannies than almost any one of his generation. As a political agent he gained the ear and heard the views of the most inaccessible ministers in Europe; as a man of fashion he was received in every house; as an alchemist and magician he invested himself in the eyes of the crowd with awe and mystery; as a musician he disarmed suspicion and was welcomed by the ladies of all courts; but these various activities seemed to have served only as a cloak for the great work of his life, served but to conceal from an unspeculative generation the seriousness of his real mission. In 1768 the course of his journeyings took him to Berlin, where the celebrated Pernetti was living. This learned Benedictine, who was a free-thinker and in favour of the secularisation of his order, had left Avignon a short while before to become librarian to the encyclopædist King. He welcomed the arrival of Saint-Germain with delight, and "was not slow in recognising in him the characteristics of an adept." Thiébault says that during the year

of his stay in Berlin they "had marvels without end, but never anything mean or scandalous."

From Berlin he went to Italy, travelling under the name of D'Aymar or Bellamare, and Graf von Lamberg discovered him near Venice experimenting in the bleaching of flax. It appears that he had found time to organise a small industry there since leaving Germany, for he had over a hundred hands in regular employment. Von Lamberg persuaded Saint-Germain to travel with him, and they visited Corsica in the year of Napoleon's birth (1769). A newsletter from Tunis shows that after exploring that island they went to Africa. "Graf Max. v. Lamberg, having paid a visit to Corsica to make various investigations, has been staying here (Tunis) since the end of June in company with the Signor de Saint-Germain, celebrated in Europe for the vastness of his political and philosophical knowledge."*

The mystery of his life became deeper when he recrossed the Mediterranean to meet the Orloffs at Leghorn, for while with them he wore the uniform of a Russian general. The Russians at the time were fighting the Turks

* "Le Notize del Mondo," Florence, July 1770.

by sea as well as on the Kaghul, and the Orloffs were waiting to embark for the war. It was observed that they addressed Saint-Germain as Count Soltykoff. The Count became renowned at this time for his recipe for "Acqua Benedetta" (*anglice* Russian Tea) an infusion used on Russian men-of-war to preserve the health of the troops in the severe heat. The English Consul at Leghorn secured the recipe, and wrote home in triumph to announce the fact.

On the fall of his old enemy Choiseul the Count hastened to Paris (1770), where he established himself splendidly and soon became an effective figure in the fashionable world. His generosity and manner of life excited the admiration of the people, and his intimacy with the old and now decrepit King gave him an importance that impressed the vulgar. After two years of French life he went on a mission to Vienna where he associated intimately with the Orloffs, to whom he had become "caro padre." Louis XV., who was at the time ruling without the hindrance of a Parliament, had probably despatched Saint-Germain to the Austrian capital to gather all

possible information as to the partition of Poland. The Treaty of Petersburg, by which this was effected, was arranged during his visit, and Austria, Russia, and Prussia shared the spoils. After its conclusion Saint-Germain returned to Paris and remained there till the death of Louis XV.* Louis XVI., on his accession, recalled Choiseul to his councils, and Saint-Germain left France. The next few years he spent in Germany in the society of the, at that time, unknown leaders of the secret societies. Bieberstein, Weishaupt, Prince Charles of Hesse, and Mirabeau are known to have been his friends; he instructed Cagliostro in the mysteries of the magician's craft, and worked in conjunction with Nicolai at securing the German press in the interest of the perfectibilist movement. In 1784 the illuminate, Dr. Biester, of Berlin, certified that Saint-Germain had been "dead as a door nail for two years." Great uncertainty and vagueness surround his latter days, for no confidence can be reposed in the announcement by one illuminate of the death of another, for, as is well known, all means to secure the end were in their code justifiable,

* May 10, 1774.

and it may have been to the interest of the society that Saint-Germain should have been thought dead. He is reported to have attended the Paris Congress of Masonry as a representative mason in 1785, but no proof of this is available. Madame d'Adhémar,* whose memoirs one cannot help suspecting are apocryphal, alleges that Saint-Germain frequently had interviews with the King and Queen, in which he warned them of their approaching fate, but "M. de Maurepas, not wishing the salvation of the country to come from any one but himself, ousted the thaumaturgist and he reappeared no more" (1788).

Madame d'Adhémar copied a letter from Saint-Germain containing prophetic verses.

> The time is fast approaching when imprudent France,
> Surrounded by misfortune she might have spared herself,
> Will call to mind such hell as Dante painted.
>
> Falling shall we see sceptre, censor, scales,
> Towers and escutcheons, even the white flag.
>
> Great streams of blood are flowing in each town;
> Sobs only do I hear, and exiles see.
> On all sides civil discord loudly roars

* "Les Souvenirs de Marie-Antoinette," cit. by Mrs. Cooper Oakley, vol. xxiii. Theos. Rev.

And uttering cries, on all sides virtue flees
As from the Assembly votes of death arise.
Great God, who can reply to murderous judges?
And on what brows august I see the swords descend!

The Queen asked Madame d'Adhémar what she thought of the verses. "They are dismaying; but they cannot affect your Majesty," she said.

Saint-Germain, who had other prophecies to make, offered to meet Madame d'Adhémar in the Church of the "Récollets" at the eight o'clock Mass. She went to the appointed place in her sedan chair and recounts the words of the "Wundermann."

"SAINT-GERMAIN. I am Cassandra, prophet of evil . . . Madame, he who sows the wind reaps the whirlwind . . . *I can do nothing; my hands are tied by a stronger than myself.*

"MADAME. Will you see the Queen?

"SAINT-GERMAIN. No; she is doomed.

"MADAME. Doomed to what?

"SAINT-GERMAIN. Death.

"MADAME. And you—you too?

"SAINT-GERMAIN. Yes—like Cazotte. . . . Return to the Palace; tell the Queen to take heed to herself, that this day will be fatal to her. . . .

"MADAME. But M. de Lafayette——

"SAINT-GERMAIN. A balloon inflated with wind! Even *now* they are settling what to do with him, whether he shall be instrument or victim; by noon all will be decided. . . . The hour of repose is past, and the decrees of Providence must be fulfilled.

"MADAME. What do they want?

"SAINT-GERMAIN. The complete ruin of the Bourbons. They will expel them from all the thrones they occupy and in less than a century they will return in all their different branches to the rank of simple private individuals. France as Kingdom, Republic, Empire, and mixed Government will be tormented, agitated, torn. From the hands of class tyrants she will pass to those who are ambitious and without merit."

The prophecies preserved by Madame d'Adhémar remind us of those of Cazotte, which La Harpe affirms were uttered in his presence, but it is always difficult for plain people, no matter how credulous they be, to credit any human being with foreknowledge of events, and it is quite probable that Madame d'Adhémar,*

* She died in 1822.

writing her memoirs in the early nineteenth century in the red afterglow of the Revolution, not only confused dates, but even invented words more prescient than any Saint-Germain ever spoke. However that be, and even if the words of Madame d'Adhémar are not to be relied on, we find ourselves still face to face with an enigmatic personality of unusual power and numberless parts. He has been dead a little more than a century, and so in time is almost one of ourselves; he lived surrounded by spies and secret agents; he took no pains to conceal his habits from the world, and yet he remains a mystery. He was involved in many of the most important events of the eighteenth century and was responsible for much of its diplomacy. Some day, perhaps, his life may be set down as a consecutive story inspired by a definite aim. It is a work worth doing, for it would prove whether Saint-Germain was, as men have so often called him, a charlatan, or whether he was, as some believe him to have been, a political genius of unrivalled ambition and great accomplishment.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

IT is impossible to dive into the whirlpool of the French Revolution without at times being overwhelmed by strong currents of emotion and dramatic sentiment. And because its violent action was so often irrelevant to the principles and ideals which it was supposed to promote, it is easy to lose consciousness, in a maze of horror or a mist of pity, of the true objective of that tremendous movement. The clear issue of the realisation of liberty was clouded in Russia some years ago by atrocious massacres of Jews, as the clear issue of the realisation of religious liberty was blurred in France a century ago by monstrous and unnecessary cruelties. The story of the laggard progression of the French nation towards tolerance and freedom of worship, ending as it did in an audacious, meteoric advance, is of absorbing interest. During the century which preceded the Revolution no advent could have seemed more hopelessly delayed than that of religious

liberty. Erect above the dull tomb of national life towered a splendid superstructure of State and Church, united and secure. Royalty with its armies, laws, nobility, prisons, authority, subserved the ends of ecclesiasticism with its princes, discipline, confraternities, monk militia, and missionaries, its prestige, persecutions, wealth and venerability. Organisations so elaborate and dominations so crushing must have appeared inviolable to all reformers; yet within the darkness of the tomb of national life lay germinating the seed which, like the thorn of Glastonbury, would one day split the ponderous weight in twain.

Without estimating in some degree the power of the Church in France during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and considering the way in which that power was used, it is difficult to get any sane notion of the meaning and aims of the seemingly frenzied innovators of the revolutionary period. When the proclamation of the liberties of the Gallican Church in 1682 made it the pride and interest of French Kings to defend an institution, confessedly national, and to some degree independent of Roman jurisdiction, the will of the Church became the law

of the State. But even prior to the assertion of her liberties her power had been great and, though the clement Edict of Nantes (1598) had appeared to indicate some feebleness in the ecclesiastical hold on the machinery of State, its gradual annulment and final revocation after eighty-seven years' existence showed that the Church was not slow to recover her grip of affairs. The financial dependence of State on Church was one of the chief causes of ecclesiastical supremacy. During the seventeenth century it had been the custom of the clergy to meet every five years to make voluntary contribution toward the charges of Government. All that was implied by the "don gratuit" may be gathered from examples picked out at hazard from records of the quinquennial assemblages. In 1665 the Church requested that heresy should be suppressed; that Catholics should not be permitted to become Protestants; that all reformed colleges and schools should be closed, and that only Catholics should be presented with judgeships. When these requests were made law, 4,000,000 livres were paid in to the State. In spite of Colbert's endeavours to protect the heretics, persecution gradually

became more open, and in 1680 the Dragonnades of Marillac made life intolerable for Huguenots. Dragoons quartered in the houses of heretics flogged the men and dragged the women of the family by the hair to church. Five years later the Revocation was complete. Protestants were interdicted from the practice of their cult; their children were to be baptized and their sick to receive sacraments by compulsion; they were forbidden to employ Catholic servants, debarred from being lawyers, printers or librarians, and prevented from keeping lodgings or inns. Their temples were demolished, and their dead accorded no Christian sepulture. By the intellectual ecclesiastics, no pity was shown for the oppressed sect. Bossuet assisted in organising the persecution, Massillon approved of it, and Fénelon, whom some people have wished to enrol among the tolerants, wrote from La Rochelle in 1685: "Je ne trouve presque plus de religionnaires à La Rochelle depuis que je paye ceux qui me les découvrent. . . . Je fais emprisonner les hommes et mettre les femmes et les filles dans les couvents de l'aveu et par l'autorité de l'évêque."

Though the death of Louis XIV. introduced

an interlude in persecution, when Dubois came to be Cardinal de Gesvres, prime minister, and head of the General Assembly of 1723, the cruellest laws against the Protestants were made once again effective.

The manner in which the Church endeavoured to crush Rationalism in France is as memorable as her effort to extirpate Protestantism. With familiar assurance she entered into conflict with the intellectual forces of the day. She greeted the appearance of the Great Encyclopædia with a condemnatory storm of books and pamphlets, and at her instigation the aims of the philosophers were travestied upon the stage. In 1758 the clergy fêted the suppression of the Encyclopædia, as they had fêted the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes long years before. Another type of ecclesiastical power is instanced by the trial of de La Barre. Twenty-three years before the fall of the Bastille, a crucifix hanging on the bridge at Abbeville was found one morning mutilated. The Bishop of Amiens and his clergy came down to inquire into the matter, and since no one knew who was responsible for the outrage, two young men, reported to hold advanced opinions and to sing

ribald songs—the Chevalier de La Barre and M. d'Étalonde—were chosen to expiate the crime. The judges declared that they were "véhémentement soupçonnés d'avoir mutilé le crucifix," and as punishment condemned them to lose their right wrists, to have their tongues torn out, their heads cut off, and their bodies burnt. Into the pile were to be thrown the "Dictionnaire philosophique" and other new works. D'Étalonde fled, and on Voltaire's letter of introduction took service with the King of Prussia. De la Barre, inflexibly brave and only eighteen, suffered the penalties enumerated.

Both Voltaire and the Encyclopædists have had recognition of men for the share which they took in destroying the prestige of the Church. Undoubtedly their work and influence were both serious and important; but beneath the philosophers and their works of light other nameless powers were striving toward enfranchisement. An attempt has been made in a previous essay to describe the extensive and intensive influence of the secret societies in France during the eighteenth century. The appeal of the Encyclopædists was to the

educated, but the secret societies made their appeal to the uneducated and the poor, who were not for their ignorance or poverty debarred from comprehending the great belief, which inspired nearly all the mystical societies of the Middle Ages and modern days, the belief in the divinity of man and in the true brotherhood and unity of humanity symbolised in the triple watchword of the Martinists, "Liberty, Fraternity, Equality." Men have banded themselves together in all ages in order to attack tyranny by destroying the idolatrous esteem in which it was held; for the effort to emancipate the human race and enable it to grow to the full stature of its manhood is an ancient endeavour, a divine fever laying hold of mystics, peasants, quakers, poets, theosophists, and all who cannot accustom themselves to the ugly inequalities of social life. Although nowadays men can further such ends openly, in other centuries they had to work stealthily in clandestine ways, and the generations of victims and martyrs who lie in the catacombs of feudalism could attest the danger of their enterprise. How many men have died in chains, how many crypts have concealed nameless cruelties from the sunlight,

how many redeemers have sacrificed the dear gift of life that tyrannies might cease, no man can tell; but without that secret soul of progress, formed deep below the consciousness of political thought and action, history would have been but a monotonous record of military and monachal despotism.

It has been thought strange that a powerful organisation like the Church fell so easily before the innovators. The secret societies, however, with their enthusiasm for humanity, were greatly responsible for the Church's temporary discomfiture, though they could not hold the advantage gained, since they had no definite new religion to substitute for the old creed. The reformers, realising that the only efficient destruction is reconstruction, made sundry attempts at civic and secular religion, which all proved too cold and unattractive to compete successfully with the warm humanity and familiar pageants of the Church's feasts.

Long before the outbreak of the Revolution, the banners of secret societies working for the good of humanity bore the words: "Down with the double despotism of Priests and Kings," and in every important town in France,

as well as in many country districts, were to be found bands of men professing the new faith of brotherhood. Ecclesiastical edicts of the eighteenth century witness to the existence and spread of workmen's unions. Fraternal societies, admitting members of both sexes, met in country districts, and discussed the problems of the people. A network of freemasonry had been successfully established over the greater part of France a few years before the outbreak of the Revolution. That strong views were held on brotherhood by masons and members of other secret societies may be gathered from the terms of their members' obligation : "I, with all the possessions, rank, honours and titles which I hold in political society, am only a man. I enjoy these things only through my fellow men, and through them also I may lose them. . . . I will oppose with all my might the enemies of the human race and of liberty."

Rousseau was a mason, and so was Mirabeau, the conqueror of the Church. The latter inducted the Bishop of Autun into the society, as well as the Duke of Orleans, who was said in his alchemistical experiments in the garrets of the Palais Royal to have destroyed Pascal's

skeleton in his crucibles. Sieyès, the first clerical member of the Third Estate, belonged to a secret society, and so did Dom Gerle, the well-known Carthusian who sat in the Assembly. An enthusiasm for Humanity—"the Supreme Being," was the flame that burnt in the breast of every member of the great secret service. All the fervour and feeling of which men are capable were needed in France in 1789 to combat the gross indifference to human suffering, the infliction of unbearable existences upon the innocent and weak, the maladministration of public institutions and public charities. It was enough to break the courage of most men, and to crack the heart-strings of the rest, to see such spurning of human life, such despising and rejecting of the diviner qualities of men. The task of making man respect man seemed insurmountable, but through shedding of blood it was accomplished.

Extracts from official reports* of the time serve to show that there was good excuse for reforming the domestic administration of both Church and State. In 1772 a fire at the Hôtel-Dieu in Paris revealed the nature of

* "Le Mouvement Religieux à Paris," Robinet.

institutional charity. One of the wards, the Salle S. Charles, contained four rows of beds, a hundred and one big ones and nine small ones. On January 6, 1786, this room held three hundred and forty sick people, and at a pinch six hundred and fifteen were packed into it. The Royal Commission appointed to investigate into hospital management in that year reported that the dead were mingled with the living, that every kind of illness was crowded together, and that[*] beds 4 ft. 4 in. wide contained four to six invalids, heads and feet alternating, all unable to move or sleep. Other unquotable details are mentioned in the report. At Bicêtre, women were chained in dark subterranean dungeons, whither rats came in hordes and gnawed their feet. In the quiet of the night inhabitants of the district were awaked from peaceful slumbers by a sound of wailing, which was audible for more than a mile. For years those who heard it paid no more attention to it than men do nowadays to the noise of a passing train. They alluded to it as the "plainte de l'hôpital," though it was a device by which hundreds of human beings howling in unison hoped to draw attention to the piteous-

ness of their condition. In the debtors' prisons disgusting usages prevailed; men and women were imprisoned promiscuously in the same cells, and the straw that was the only furniture of their prison remained for weeks unchanged.

Thus under the old régime were charity and justice travestied and made into a mockery. Turgot, Beccaria and Condorcet, *not* the clergy, had lifted up their voices in protest against these infamies; D'Holbach, Diderot and Naigeon had been so maddened by them as to declare that "Catholicism was a religion for barbarians." Behind the silent walls of asylums, hospitals, and prisons the hideous work of spreading disease, corruption and death went on in the name of Christ and in the name of the King.

It is one of the marvels of that marvellous epoch that in the midst of such abuses the outraged people of France were moderate enough in the first days of the great social upheaval to attack ecclesiastical abuses only, but never the Christian religion. It is also worth remembering that the French Revolution was initiated by the "Veni Creator," as it was concluded by the "Te Deum." In the late

spring of 1789 the procession of the Estates, after singing the "Veni Creator," passed out of the cathedral at Versailles to the church of S. Louis to assist at a Mass of the Holy Ghost, and to listen to a sermon on religion as contributing to the happiness of nations. Thirteen years later, after rivers of blood had flowed and all the sanctuaries had been defiled, another procession passed through the streets of Paris to sing a "Te Deum" at Notre-Dame, and to assist at a Mass in celebration of the remarriage of a Church and State that had been eight years divorced.

To describe a movement unguided by any commanding personality, and unmapped by definite plans of progress, is perhaps less interesting than to describe the influence of a Cromwell or a Luther. The religious conflicts of the Revolution more resemble a sea of contrary waves, beating as it were unmeaningly against each other, than a strong and swelling tide of reform overwhelming France. The voices that sound clear above the tumult are very few. It is vain to listen for a dominant note in the speeches of the orthodox churchmen of the day, for they were powerless

to sway opinion or control the march of progress. Abbé Maury, who opposed Mirabeau on the question of Church privileges in the Constituent Assembly, and M. Émery, principal of Saint-Sulpice Seminary, who, though he took no part in politics, was renowned for piety and wisdom, were the two most notable servants of the Church. In the ranks of the revolutionaries there were several distinguished ecclesiastics. Abbé Fauchet, in bullet-torn cassock, preached a funeral sermon over the dead stormers of the Bastille, and passionately cried: "Liberty is no longer Cæsar's, it belongs to human nature!" He blessed the colours of the citizen soldiers, and was called by Madame Roland "that best of revolutionaries." Though he served as president of police and commune, he eventually went to the scaffold for his faith. Sieyès, the Sulpician, wrote the famous pamphlet, "Qu'est-ce que le Tiers-État," which had a prodigious circulation in the beginning of the year 1789 and which directed the career of the Third Estate at Versailles. Not only did its author assist to frame the "Civil Constitution of the Clergy" in 1790, but he helped to draw up

the Concordat of 1802. Both Sieyès and Talleyrand lived to hold high secular posts of State, and the latter, as is well known, took an important part in the debates of the Constituent Assembly, and was responsible for broaching the scheme of Church disendowment. But perhaps the noblest, if not the ablest, of the clerics was Curé Grégoire, who firmly believed in Christianity and in the mission of the Constitutional Church, and who, throughout the Terror, when to be a priest meant death, wore the violet robe and cross both in the Assembly and in the street.

All the reformers, lay and clerical, were fired by principles and ideals; few had any plans for translating them into fact; so the study of their empirical efforts after justice provokes something like despair. A clause dealing with freedom of conscience and worship was easily and swiftly embodied in the Declaration of Rights, but the men were scarce who realised how hard and slow a task would prove the establishment of such liberty.

The opinion of the country on the Church was represented in the "cahiers des doléances," prepared for the States-General in 1789.

Strictly speaking, there was no religious question in them, for they dealt, not with dogma or rite, but with discipline. The "cahiers" of the First Estate demanded that regulars should be forced to fulfil their earlier and more strenuous obligation, while the "cahiers" of the Third Estate denounced the archbishops, bishops, and regulars as "idle, vicious, and wealthy," but were unanimous in their praise of the parish priest. A letter illustrative of the state of affairs in country districts is that of Abbé Mesmiont to Cardinal Ludovisi:

"I do all that I can [speaking of the peasants] to contribute to their well-being, a few of the neighbouring gentry second my efforts, but these efforts are expended in vain; three abbeys, a commandery, and several priories seize all the resources of the poor . . . the useless clergy are but a dead tree that should be cut down—a parasitic, greedy growth, fit only to be lopped."

During the memorable August night when feudal privileges were abdicated in a blaze of emotion by the aristocrats, the clergy, carried away by the inspiration of the hour, volunteered

to sacrifice plurality of benefices, annates, and other privileges to the nation. Not till some days afterwards did they realise the gravity of the step they had taken in making the hitherto unquestioned privileges of the Church a matter debatable by the people in the National Assembly. Without reflection they had opened the door to disendowment, and had tacitly admitted that their position was dependent on the nation's will. Though neither Mirabeau nor Sieyès was present on the great night, they both took a conspicuous part in the subsequent debate on tithes, and Mirabeau was quick to see the advantage given by the clergy and to use it in a speech wherein he proved that tithes were not property, but a contribution from the nation to that branch of the public service which was concerned with the ministers of her altars, a mere "subsidy by means of which the nation salaried its officers of morality." The peasants, imploring to be delivered from the great burden of tithes, had forced this early consideration of the problem on the Assembly. In spite of Arthur Young's observations to the contrary, great abuses were connected with tithe-gathering in the provinces, the demands

of the gatherers were not always limited to the legal tenth; sometimes a sixth, and even a fourth, was wrested from the unfortunate and defenceless cultivator. In one of the "cahiers" the tithes are alluded to as "ces sangsues accablantes."

The majority of prelates were not in favour of throwing away 70,000,000 livres. "What!" exclaimed a priest in the Assembly, "when you invited us to come and join you, in the name of the God of Peace, was it to cut our throats?" Sieyès spoke against confiscation, but was in favour of replacing tithes by some other means of payment. In spite of all protests, de Juigné, Archbishop of Paris, rose and closed the debate by renouncing in the name of the French clergy all claim to tithes. From this abrogation the logical step to complete disendowment and the conversion of the Church into a salaried department of the State was small. Affairs moved rapidly; a few days later a committee was appointed to inquire into methods of ecclesiastical reform. A month afterwards, when some one in the Assembly rose during a debate on taxation and suggested that the Church should be asked to sacrifice her plate, Mirabeau declared

"that treasures accumulated by the piety of ancestors would not change their religious destination by issuing forth from obscurity into the service of the country." To every one's surprise de Juigné declared that the clergy were ready to abandon all treasure that was not necessary to the ceremonies of the Church. The clerical policy of disarming the Assembly by unexpected generosity, in order to evade a discussion on the Church's property and the titles under which she held about one-fifth of the land of France, did not prove a success. Mirabeau, who did not wish to place the State under obligation to the hierarchy, asserted that the property of the Church was by nature the property of the nation, and therefore that it was not possible for the clergy to make any sacrifice. He fully realised the probable feebleness in debate of those whose authority had hitherto been undisputed; their uncertainty as to the titles under which the Church collected, held, and administered her funds, as well as their inability to prove the legality of their ancient monopolies. Dupont de Nemours, a deputy, drew up a table of the clergy's debt to the State since 1706, and argued that since the Church enjoyed her

property under certain conditions, those, if not fulfilled, caused her to forfeit all claim over it. He proved, for example, that a milliard masses could not be said by sixty thousand priests, and gave other instances of the Church's want of good faith. On October 11 the Bishop of Autun formally proposed that the property of the Church should be henceforth the property of the nation. A violent discussion followed, which lasted till November 2. The press bristled with arguments, and sheaves of pamphlets were sent to every deputy. Mirabeau, by far the most able member of the Assembly, carried the people with him, partly by his magnificent oratory and partly by his clear and easily followed arguments. He appealed to common sense, and argued that the living should not be fettered by the dead: "Si tous les hommes qui aient vécu avaient eu un tombeau, il aurait bien fallu, pour trouver des terres à cultiver, renverser ces monuments stériles, et remuer les cendres des morts pour nourrir les vivants."

His main opponent was Abbé Maury, and the two men were supposed by the public of the day to resemble each other :

Deux insignes chefs de parti
D'intrigue ici tiennent bureau ;
Chacun à l'autre est assorti :
Même audace et front de taureau.

L'on pourrait faire le pari
Qu'ils sont nés de la même peau,
Car, retournez abé Mauri,
Vous y retrouverez Mirabeau.

Mirabeau carried the vote of the Assembly in his closing speech, when he argued that the clergy accumulated wealth, not for themselves as a corporation, but for the benefit of the nation, and proved that the property of the Church was in all points identical with that of the Crown. The terms of the motion ran as follows :

" 1°. Tous les biens ecclésiastiques sont à la disposition de la nation, à la charge de pourvoir d'une manière convenable aux frais du culte, à l'entretien de ses ministres et au soulagement des pauvres, sous la surveillance et d'après les instructions des provinces.

" 2°. Dans les dispositions à faire pour l'entretien des ministres de la religion, il ne pourra être assuré à la dotation d'aucun curé moins de douze cent livres par année,

non compris le logement et les jardins en dépendant." *

The minimum annual provision of twelve hundred livres for curés was generous, since under the old régime many country clergy had enjoyed but half or three-quarters of that sum. There can be no question but that the Assembly meant to deal honestly with the revenues which it had taken upon itself to administer. The fact that this administration proved a complete failure does not incriminate the original intention. In all ages the road to anarchy has been paved with good intentions.

The problem of how to deal with monastic foundations arose out of the transference of ecclesiastical properties to State ownership, and in December Deputy Treilhaud made his report to the Assembly on the Religious Orders. The eighteenth century cannot be called the age of faith, and investigation into the habits of religious societies was sure to be productive of unedifying disclosures. Moreover, since the legal age for pronouncing vows had been raised from sixteen to twenty-one, the monasteries of France had been gradually emptying. A few

* "Histoire de M. Émery," p. 115.

instances will show the numerical decrease of the inhabitants of religious houses in the country. The community of the Benedictine Abbey of Bennaye was reduced from fifty inmates to four; that of Bec-Helluin, built for eighty inmates, was reduced to nineteen; while the Couvent des Deux Amants contained but the prior and one monk. Discipline was everywhere greatly relaxed, and many houses had acquired a most discreditable reputation. The ecclesiastical prisons of Paris were said to be worse than the Bastille, and it was rumoured that dozens of victims languished in their "in pace" cells. The decision of the Assembly not to recognise monastic vows as binding on man or woman, "because they were another term for civic suicide," was the means of revealing that almost every convent contained unwilling, restless inmates. A decree was promulgated throughout France allowing all monks and nuns other than those engaged in nursing the sick or instructing the young, to make a declaration before the appointed civil authority, and on quitting their special habit to receive a pension. In one monastery of two hundred and seventy-four monks all but seventy-nine became citizens; in

another, twenty-seven out of eighty-four re-entered the world; in a large convent at Besançon nineteen women out of three hundred and fifty-eight desired to abjure their vows.*

No exact record of the number of religious in 1789 can be obtained. It has been roughly estimated at 60,000, and is supposed numerically to have balanced the number of secular priests. Equally uncertain is the value of the property of the Church at that date. The ecclesiastical accounts, prepared at the beginning of the Revolution for the public records, do not probably give a true version of capital and income. The annual value of the sequestered wealth of the Church has been approximately assessed at 180,000,000 livres, inclusive of tithes, but exclusive of alms and casual charity.

The Assembly encountered strenuous opposition in its endeavour to set in motion the secular administration of ecclesiastical funds. The committee which had been appointed in August 1789 to inquire into methods of Church reform presented its report in April 1790. The report dealt entirely with questions of discipline and with remedies for old and obvious abuses.

* Sciout, "Constitution Civile du Clergé," vol. i. p. 292.

It was proposed, for instance, that there should be a redistribution of parishes and dioceses, corresponding to the new departmental divisions of France; that a table of priests and chapels necessary to serve the people should be drawn up with some reference to the population of the districts; that priests should be elected, not nominated; that their salaries and residences should be fixed; and that they should be under the supervision of municipal authorities. The committee proved itself pathetically anxious to fall into no heresy, and Camus, the hero of the debate on the report, endeavoured to prove by synodal decrees of the fourth century the exact agreement of the new proposals for Church discipline with the letter of the New Testament. Monsignor Méric, the biographer of M. Émery, speaks of the work of the diligent and timid committee as "les délibérations haineuses . . . les arguties misérables de la plus mauvaise théologie . . . une violente attaque contre l'Église."

At the end of May the report was adopted and, with a few corrections, became the Civil Constitution of the Clergy. The King delayed appending his signature to the new measure as

long as he dared, and on July 28, when he saw the limit of his resistance approaching, he wrote to warn the Pope of his approaching capitulation: "Votre Sainteté sent mieux que personne combien il importe de conserver les nœuds qui unissent la France au Saint-Siège. Elle ne mettra pas en doute que l'intérêt le plus puissant de la religion, dans la situation présente des affaires, ne soit de prévenir une division funeste." On August 24 the King yielded to the pressure of the Constituent Assembly, and by his signature made the measure law. Meanwhile the Pope, though retarding for many months his official declaration of opinion, privately recommended resistance to all the bishops of France, and instructed them to suffer all things rather than yield to the demands of the Civil Constitution.

Some reformers thought that Mirabeau and Talleyrand had moved too fast in making implacable enemies of all churchmen, and many men in France agreed with Abbé Maury and his friend, M. Émery, that the confiscation of Church property was criminal spoliation. Many members of the Assembly had been earnestly opposed to the decrees confiscating the property

of the Church and of religious orders, and it was obvious that the innovators would have to contend with wide-spread hostility.

In order to test the adherents of reform, the Assembly, after much argument, made it compulsory for all clergy to swear to support the new Constitution. Very reluctantly the King was forced into signing this second edict. Caricatures of the King with two faces were sold in the gutters of Paris : one face said to a bishop, "I will destroy the Constitution"; and the other said to a member of the Assembly, "I will uphold the Constitution."

Two days after Christmas the business of swearing fidelity to the new Act was begun in the Assembly. Curé Grégoire, who later became a constitutional bishop, was the first to take the oath; and, speaking for himself and for the fifty-nine priests who accompanied him, and who included in their ranks Dom Gerle, he said : "Après le plus mûr, le plus sérieux examen, nous déclarons ne rien apercevoir dans la Constitution Civile du Clergé qui puisse blesser les vérités saintes que nous devons croire et enseigner." It is interesting to note that Grégoire, unlike others, did not retract this

opinion in dying, for, when pressed by a priest to renounce his earlier heresy, he said: "Jeune homme, ce n'est pas sans examen que j'ai prêté serment, ce n'est pas sans de sérieuses méditations au pied de la croix que j'ai accepté l'épiscopat." Talleyrand and Gobel, names sinister in Catholic annals, took the oath on December 28 and January 2 respectively. On January 3 twenty-three curés, members of the Assembly, sealed their adherence to the new decree, and on the 4th, Barnave having moved that all ecclesiastical members of the Assembly be asked to conform, and that in the event of refusal they should be replaced by jurors, an appeal by name to the clerical deputies was made in alphabetical order. M. de Bonnac, Bishop of Agen, was the first called. He replied: "Messieurs, les sacrifices de la fortune me coûtent peu; mais il en est un que je ne saurais faire, celui de votre estime et de ma foi; je serais trop sûr de fondre l'une et l'autre, si je prêtais le serment qu'on exige de moi." * After two bishops and three priests had refused the oath, and four had taken it, the President caused the nominal appeal to cease, and asked the ecclesiastics col-

* "Histoire de M. Émery," p. 153.

lectively whether there were any among them who would consent to be sworn. All except the four mentioned refused, and Catholics speak with intense pride of the courage of their deputies on this occasion. M. Émery called it "the triumph day of the Church in France," and wished to perpetuate its memory by an anniversary. Mirabeau, who considered the motion the great tactical mistake it proved itself to be, moved, however, that the second part be adopted. This was carried by a large majority. Thus was persecution inaugurated against the Church, and the sacred principle of liberty denied by its apostles.

The second and third Sundays of the new year were the days appointed for the Government agents to exact the oath of fidelity from the parish priests of Paris. It had been decided, in order not to dislocate the services of the Church, that non-jurors should continue to practise until replaced by jurors. The agents visited many deserted churches from which the curés had disappeared; but at Saint-Sulpice they found twenty-six assenting priests, and at Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois three. The result of this test could not have been encouraging to

the authorities, since but forty priests in all conformed.* In the country the visits of the Government emissaries to administer the oath were met with varying results. In the department of Doubs only four out of four hundred and ninety took the oath; in the diocese of Besançon nine hundred and seven gave in their allegiance to the Constitution; in the district of Valençiennes, four conformed and one hundred and twenty-six refused.† Corsica became riotous at the new enactment, as did La Vendée. The Assembly, which had not anticipated serious opposition to its scheme of Church administration, received the provincial reports with deep disappointment. But it having been decided to pension all non-juring priests, the Government proceeded immediately to set in motion the elections that were to fill the vacancies created by their eviction. Recruits were hastily collected from the ranks of lay brothers, beadles, and choristers, and were often ordained after a few weeks' training. Since but five bishops out of one hundred and twenty-one had accepted

* "Le Mouvement Religieux à Paris pendant la Révolution," vol. i. p. 387.

† Sciout, "Constitution Civile du Clergé," vol. ii. p. 93.

the Constitution, it was necessary to consecrate others. Talleyrand, bishop of Autun, assisted by Gobel, Bishop of Lydda, and Miroudot, Bishop of Babylon, proceeded with the consecration of the priests elected to fill up the vacant bishoprics. One of the seminarists of Saint-Sulpice, who attended the ceremony in L'Église de l'Oratoire, notes that Talleyrand followed the Roman Pontifical, omitting only the reading of the Bulls and the oath of fidelity to the Pope. Gobel, who was elected as Metropolitan of Paris, was inducted into his see on Wednesday, March 30; and the new curés, who were nicknamed "juraciers," were installed on Passion Sunday, April 3. In the later spring of 1791 arrived the long-delayed decision of the Pope on the Civil Constitution, embodied in two encyclicals. The Papal Internuncio, Salamon, who kept interesting memoirs of his experiences, delivered both encyclicals secretly to the Metropolitans of France. The earlier brief criticised the consecration of the new bishops by Talleyrand as having excluded the oath of loyalty to the Pope, the examination of the elected, and the professions of faith. It therefore declared all

such elections and consecrations null. The later brief was publicly burnt in the Place Royale, and soon afterwards an effigy of Pius VI., "l'ogre du Tibre," as it was nicknamed, dressed in full canonicals and holding the two briefs in its hand, its head encircled by a band bearing the word "Feudalism," and its body by another bearing the words "Civil War," was the centre of a big bonfire. Before burning the effigy, the promoters of the spectacle removed the cross and the ring from the figure as being "symbols worthy of all honour."

Easter, 1791, was a day of trial for the faithful; though the King had endorsed and officially approved the State Church, he was prevented by his conscience from really participating in its services. Since his confessor had taken the oath he went privately to a Jesuit for his confession, and received communion from Cardinal Montmorency in the chapel of the Tuileries. Paris was in an uproar when it heard of this breach of the Constitution, and a notice was posted by the clubs to the following effect:

"La société, sur la dénonciation à elle faite que le premier fonctionnaire public de la nation

permet que des prêtres réfractaires se retirent dans sa maison et y exercent publiquement, au scandale des Français et de la loi, des fonctions publiques qui sont interdites par elle; qu'il a même reçu aujourd'hui la communion pascale et entendu la messe d'un des prêtres réfractaires, elle dénonce aux représentants de la nation ce premier sujet de la loi, comme réfractaire aux lois constitutionnelles."

Many juring priests, on learning their condemnation by the Pope, retracted their oath and made their peace with the orthodox clergy. The clubs urged that strong measures should be enforced against refractories, but in spite of their protests the Constituent Assembly throughout its session endeavoured to realise the ideal of tolerance, and solemnly persevered in its attempt to reconcile opposites by establishing a dominant Church while adhering to the spirit of the clause on religious liberty in the Declaration of Rights. It decreed that the freedom of non-jurors should be respected, and that they should have such churches for their use as were not already appropriated by the State. At the same time it encouraged the Constitutional Church to give

examples of its efficiency. A band of children who had received their first communion at the hand of Gobel, the new Metropolitan, were paraded through Paris and received by the Assembly as the first-fruits of the State Church. Further to promote and popularise the ideal of tolerance, the Assembly organised a public funeral at the Pantheon in honour of the Apostle of Tolerance—Voltaire. He had been buried at a country abbey thirteen years earlier, after a service had been held over his body in the Masonic Lodge of the Nine Sisters at Paris, and it was thought fitting that he should be re-interred in the Temple of the Nation. Triumphal arches, levelled roads, and interested crowds awaited the cortège. Women touched the hearse with kerchiefs and kept them long afterwards as relics. Arrived on the site of the old Bastille, where Voltaire himself had suffered several periods of detention, the coffin rested for the night in a grove of roses, myrtles and laurels, in the midst of which the old stones of the prison walls were disposed as rocks. The next morning representatives of the sections, clubs, and municipality of Paris came in bands to escort the ashes to their final resting-place.

The efforts, however, of the Constituent Assembly towards actualising religious toleration were doomed to failure ; fanatical passions had been aroused which no Government could control. The outcome of the Assembly's ecclesiastical policy had been to consolidate the clergy and the faithful into a determined opposition to reform. The private chapels of hospitals and convents became the meeting-places of conspirators, and the whole orthodox Church was leagued against all plans of reorganisation. Much bitter feeling was engendered in the breasts of the departmental officials, and France lapsed automatically into the state of sporadic civil war which culminated in the rising in La Vendée. Exasperated by this resistance, the Government cancelled the decree adjudicating pensions to non-conformists, and during the last months of the Constituent Assembly's session persecutions, unsanctioned by its decrees, became the common practice. Non-conformists were driven to celebrate their rites in barns and private houses and were not allowed openly to administer any of the sacraments. Fights over the bodies of the dead took place, and often, in spite of the protests of relations, corpses were

torn out of coffins to be buried by conformist clergy. According to the sympathies of the district, one party or the other was violently championed; a juror was shot in the pulpit of one church and a non-juror hanged to the chancel lamp of another. To avoid death, priests emigrated in thousands. Grégoire says that by 1792, 18,000 had fled, and after that date quite as many more followed them. About 4000 took refuge in England, 700 of whom were lodged by Government at Winchester. Many delightful stories of the generosity of the English to the penniless priests are told by Grégoire in his "Memoirs."

When the summer was over, the Constituent Assembly, while prohibiting its members from seeking election to the new body, transmitted its powers to the Legislative Assembly, together with a number of ecclesiastical Gordian knots, which the new Government, with Alexandrian promptness, proceeded to sever. The Legislative Assembly as a whole was hostile to the Church. The brilliant deputies from the Gironde, as well as the men of the Mountain, were non-Christian, and many of the younger members had been gathered from administrative

posts in the departments, where they had learnt to regard the Church as the chief enemy of the Revolution. They knew that feeling against the Civil Constitution was being particularly fomented in country districts by two religious orders, which had not come under the ban of the Constituent Assembly, the missionaries of Saint Laurent, who were peculiarly active in counselling opposition to the new Church, and the Sœurs de la Sagesse, who, though useful as nurses, were said to inculcate seditious teaching against the Government. Many priests, according to an official report from Meaux,* told women that it was better to strangle their babies at birth than to let them be baptized by a "juracier." The Bishop of Langres exhorted the priests in his diocese to hold meetings secretly in which they should explain to the faithful the horror in which conformists should be held. Some "intrus" country clergy begged to be allowed to live in towns and make expeditions to their parishes, since the agriculturists were so hostile to them.

Besides legalising priestly marriage in the con-

* "Le Mouvement Religieux à Paris pendant la Révolution," vol. ii. p. 131.

stitutional Church, a question much debated in the Constituent Assembly, the new Government passed a very important measure, enforcing the civil registration of births, deaths, and marriages, a reform which had been made law in England under the Commonwealth. By this decree, it was demonstrated to all that the approval of the Church was not necessary to the foundation of families, as it had been in centuries past, when Huguenots had no existence in the eyes of the law. By this measure the phantoms of old indignities and injustices were laid for ever.

In spite of the fact that the Civil Constitution had proved a failure, the Legislative Assembly did not renounce the hope of making it a success. Many people thought this hope futile. André Chenier, who was eager to separate Church and State completely, expressed his views in the "Moniteur." Ramond, in the Assembly, proposed that all cults should be subsidised by the State, the plan afterwards adopted by Napoleon, but the Assembly, determined to make one more effort to conciliate the clergy and strengthen the State Church, listened to none of these suggestions. By altering the oath of loyalty to the Civil Constitution into a promise to support

"les rapports civils et les règles extérieures du culte catholique en France," and by ordaining that bishops and priests were no longer to be called public functionaries, a bid was made for fresh adherents. All the clergy who refused the revised oath were to be charged with revolt, and made liable to punishment. According to "Les Annales Catholiques," many non-juring clergy thought it only right that they should plight themselves to nation, law, and king, and saw in it a great difference from the old oath of the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, though, as a matter of fact, the verbal alteration made no difference to the intention of the pledge, which was designed to attract the support of Catholics to a schismatic Constitution. Many celebrated congregations, however, accepted it without demur, amongst them those of Saint-Lazare, l'Oratoire, Saint-Sulpice, and La Doctrine Chrétienne, as well as nearly all the unemigrated clergy of the capital. After long meditation, M. Émery advised those who consulted him to take it; he thought it lawful and purely civil, and moreover he was anxious to save further priests from banishment.

In making non-conformists legally punishable

the Legislative Assembly were countenancing a promiscuous persecution which they were unable to regulate. A list of non-jurors was made out in Paris, and through the agency of the Jacobin party they were subjected to every kind of indignity. Convents were entered by force; that of the Dominican nuns was raided, and when the superior of the school of S. Charles refused to admit a juring priest to its chapel roughs were employed to force the door and occupy the convent till the discomfited nuns had fled. Men in cassocks were insulted in the streets, and nuns flogged by the women of the Halles. The comic papers were filled with representations of these indecent adventurings.

It was agreed during the winter that all religious bodies engaged in teaching and nursing should be suppressed; and Sisters of Charity were discussed as if they were vermin to be exterminated. Roland, who became Minister of the Interior in 1792, had to execute the decision of the Assembly. He was known as a "prêtrophobe," and as such his accession to power was celebrated by his Jacobin supporters at Lyons by a scandalous invasion of oratories and convents. The suppression of educational

communities included among many others the Sorbonne, which it is not uninteresting to note was dissolved just thirty years after it had condemned "Êmile." It was found impossible to suppress the nursing orders altogether, but their "dangerous" activities were curtailed by submitting them to civil direction. Of the opposition and violent reprisals provoked by the execution of these decrees Roland rendered an account in the Legislative Assembly, endeavouring to justify local and illegal persecutions by saying of monks and nuns: "Tant qu'on laissera une libre carrière à leurs trames perfides, jamais la tranquillité publique ne se rétablira : l'expérience, que est plus forte que tous les raisonnements, le prouve avec évidence. . . ." He acknowledged that forty-two departments had taken action in ways neither prescribed nor authorised by the Constitution. He approved of a decree passed by the Assembly for the immediate deportation of priests as a "measure of public safety." * By this law non-conformists were penalised in one clause on being denounced by twenty citizens of the same "canton," while in another they were made liable to

* May 27, 1792.

banishment if one or more active citizen of the department could prove that they had excited trouble by some exterior act. The King, in spite of Roland's insistence, exercised his privilege of vetoing a measure which it was popularly supposed would rid the country of 50,000 priests, but he could not stem the flowing tide of feeling against the reactionaries.

On June 7 the Fête Dieu processions took place. Juring and non-juring priests paraded in the rain and mud; the juring processions were escorted by State functionaries, though when a downpour came on they could not get shelter, even for the Host, at a convent which they attempted to enter. The previous year the Constituent Assembly had assisted in the procession, and this year the Legislative Assembly suspended its sitting, but did not attend officially. On June 20 the people, furious at the way M. Veto, as they called the King, had used his remainder of authority, invaded the Tuileries and crowned him with the red cap of liberty. Not two months later the people, impatient of the last shred of privilege, stormed the Tuileries in a fiercer mood and encountered the brave Swiss guards, while

M. Veto himself took refuge in the stenographer's box in the Assembly. The mob soon pushed matters to extremities, and when the Commune of Paris seized the executive power all the vetoed measures were suddenly declared law. Church bells were melted for cannon, and empty convents were turned into factories and workshops. Many priests were imprisoned, and several hundred at once banished. By the end of August, Tallien, member of the Commune, was able to announce to the Legislative Assembly that organised massacres were about to take place in the prisons. On the evening of the first day of the September massacres, Fouché asserted from the tribune that two hundred priests lay dead at Les Carmes.

The behaviour of the discredited and hunted priests was characterised by dignity and courage. Some met death praying in the garden of their prison; others took refuge in its chapel, and their blood spattered the walls of that consecrated place. When all was over the crowd was admitted to the slaughter-house.

The Papal Internuncio, Salamon, who was arrested at the time, wrote an account of those

September days. Imprisoned in an old granary with eighty others, he lamented the dirt and stench of the place of his detention more than the fact of his incarceration, and prided himself on the fact that his neat lay clothes and powdered hair contrasted favourably with the unwashed and unshaven appearance of the priests among whom he was suddenly thrown. With sixty-two out of the eighty prisoners he was transported from the granary to the Abbaye; the eighteen left behind were under orders to rejoin Salamon and his contingent on the next day, but the delay in their case proved fatal, since all but one of them were assassinated in their carriages on the road to the Abbaye. The dreary convent hall, in which their forerunners were enclosed, contained neither seat nor bed; their misery was mocked by a jeering gaoler who announced to them the massacre of the priests at Les Carmes. His auditors, realising their immediate peril, began to recite the litanies for the dying and the prayers for those in the last agony. As the howling mob approached, Salamon, as if winged by terror, escaped up the wall through the window into a courtyard. There he met a man with hands

dyed in blood, to whom he protested his innocence of any crime against the country. Conducted by this chance acquaintance to the court, with shaking knees he watched his recent companions all being hacked to death. More determined than ever by this spectacle to save his own life, he waited during the all-night tribunal and, by swearing himself a lawyer and clerk of the Parliament and praising the patriots, he escaped immediate death, and in the early morning was thrown into a small prison. Eventually released, he escaped to the Bois de Boulogne, where he lived for months in hiding. Imprisoned again under the Directoire, he again escaped and lived to enjoy many peaceful years. "Mon Martyre," as he names the record of his experiences, presents a vivid picture of the Terror.

The National Convention succeeded the Legislative Assembly in October 1792, and together with the newly elected Commune, inaugurated a definitely anti-Christian campaign. The Convention was too much interested in serious reforms to sympathise with the fate of priests or King. Absorbed in the problems of secular education; laying the basis of the new

civil code; reforming weights and measures; founding museums; reorganising the army; and reforming the management of hospitals, it remained indifferent as to the disposal of the remnants of feudality. The death of the King took place without creating any disturbance; the people seemed as indifferent to his fate as the Government.

According to Monsignor Méric, a good many of the young priests of Saint-Sulpice remained in Paris, to be of what service they could to the faithful. M. Émery, their superior, was incarcerated in that "vestibule of death," the Conciergerie, but he was able to remain in communication with his spiritual sons who worked as turners, gardeners or labourers, and managed to inform them from his prison which tumbrils contained penitents and how they were to be recognised. Then, at a place agreed, sometimes in front of a house, sometimes at the scaffold, the condemned person recollected himself, made an act of contrition, and received from the priest hidden in the crowd a last absolution. In the intervals of his ghostly labours M. Émery sat quietly in the public gaol, his ears stopped with wax, reading Thomas

of Aquin's "Summa." He was quite composed, though he believed his to be the common fate of waiting for the hasty summons before the tribunal, the hurried interrogation, the slow drive over the cobbled streets, the vision of a crowd of many faces, and the quick, merciful blade. But Robespierre knew this priest's value too well to let him die; he said that since M. Émery had so much power in reconciling his flock to death, it were better to keep him in gaol, that lamentation and hysteria might cease.

The Duchess de Noailles-Mouchy wrote to her daughters saying Émery was their good angel; and Marie Antoinette was comforted during the last days of her long imprisonment by thinking that he was silently praying for her in a cell adjacent to her own. On the morning fixed for her execution she was visited by a constitutional priest, whose ministrations she declined, but who was ordered to accompany her to the scaffold. Coincidentally with her death, the dust of elder generations of French kings was scattered to the winds, for the tombs of St. Denys were rifled by the people, who thus proclaimed that the divinity which hedges Kings was dead in France.

The year 1793, which both the Queen and M. Émery spent in gaol, was marked by growing hostility to priests. Revolutionary tribunals with powers of life and death were nominated in Paris and the provinces. On March 18, 1793, the Convention decreed death in twenty-four hours to all priests already condemned to deportation, and for all non-jurors returning to or remaining in France. As a consequence, priests were driven on to boats at seaport towns and there left, except for the ministrations of the charitable, to die of starvation. Scores perished in the Noyades of Nantes. The nuns of Compiègne went, like the Girondins, singing to the scaffold. Many priests were chained to the galleys, and were not allowed to kneel or pray; some were scourged until they became imbeciles; others were neglected until gangrene and scurvy devoured them.

A famous scene took place in the Assembly when Gobel, his vicars, and several curés declared that they wished to shake off the character that had been conferred on them by superstition. Mad applause greeted Gobel's surrender of cross and ring, and adoption of the red cap of liberty. After the retractations came a display of patriotic

offerings. Both into the Convention and the Commune a stream of sacred vessels, sacerdotal ornaments and embroidered vestments flowed. The vestments of "unutterable Dubois" caparisoned an ass, and his mitre was bound upon its ears. The "spoils of superstition" were handed over to a specially appointed committee to deal with, and all the actors in this scene drank from a chalice the wine of brotherly love.

As time went on a kind of ruthlessness laid hold of good Republicans. From talking of Lycurgus, and dreaming of the stern days of old, they became in character and action inflexible and without pity. Women went proudly and unshriven to the scaffold. Men emulated Scævola and Cato. Adam Lux called Charlotte Corday greater than Brutus, and Madame Roland sustained herself in "that pasture of great souls," the "Lives" of Plutarch. Abbé Barthélemy's "Voyage d'Anacharsis" lay on every table, and many men changed their Christian appellations for the classic nomenclature of Greece and Rome. Austerity in dress and furniture became the outer sign of the new ideals. Hair was left unpowdered, satin coats

were replaced by fustian wear. Elaborate baroque furniture disappeared from houses to permit the classic couch and hanging lamp to appear. The intellectuals were naturally out of sympathy with Catholicism, since their gaze was fixed on Rome, not Calvary. Mysticism was ruled out of life, which henceforth was to run on clear, definite, virtuous lines. The Convention became more and more audaciously philosophic, and, dominated by the Hébertists, it abolished the Christian era and opened the door to classic experiments. Anacharsis Clootz developed his theories on the divinity of the human race at the bar of the tribune, and the hierophant, Quintus Aucler, proved to his own satisfaction that the worship of Jesus was a degenerate form of paganism. Romme's proposal of naming the months of the new calendar after ideas, such as Justice and Equality, was seriously considered, but later seasonal names, suggested by Fabre d'Églantine, were adopted. On August 10, at a national feast in Paris, the statue of Nature was honoured by libations. All over the provinces secular cults were honoured, and the communes consecrated temples to Reason in

every considerable town. On the motion of David, Marat's remains were transported to the Pantheon, and men invoked "the sacred heart of Marat." At Nevers, Fouché said that he had been charged by the Convention "to substitute for superstitious and hypocritical cults, to which people still unhappily cling, that of the Republic and national morality." He began to laicise the cemeteries by substituting a statue of Sleep for the cross, and by writing up over the gates "Death is an eternal sleep" —the phrase used in the lodges by the illuminists to describe that state to which we all must pass. Fouché also arranged that a commissary in a red cap should accompany the funerals of good Republicans, bearing an urn with this inscription: "L'homme juste ne meurt jamais. Il vit dans la mémoire de ses concitoyens."

The Commune, to use the language of the day, had reached "le sommet de son capitole"; but, in spite of its activity, priests still continued to administer the sacraments furtively and secretly to reserve the Host.

After the fall of the Girondins, Hébertists, and Dantonists, Couthon, who played Baptist to Robespierre's Messiah, announced yet another

civil religion—that of the Supreme Being. Its scheme purported to embody the Deism of the "Contrat Social," and though for a time it superseded the cult of Reason, it speedily proved the destruction of its inventor, and the man whom Heine called the bloody hand of Rousseau went to the scaffold in the same blue Werther costume in which he had played pontiff at the inaugural festival of his new religion six weeks before. At his death came the epoch of real separation between Church and State.

Cambon, who had previously * proposed that each sect should defray its own expenses, moved,† as president of the Finance Committee, "that the Republic should pay neither salaries nor the outgoings of any sect." Thus, owing to financial exigencies, and, as it were, to accident, the separation of Church and State was accomplished after five years' agitation. Though the Budget of Public Worship was abolished, liberty of creeds was not proclaimed, and consequently persecution lingered on, like an evil habit, which could not be at once broken with.

The world had already seen the fall of

* November 13, 1792. † September 18, 1794.

monarchies and the impeachment of kings, but it had never heard the decree: "La nation ne salarie aucun culte"—a decree which De Maistre quoted as evidence of the Satanic character of the Revolution, and which, embodied in the Constitution of the year III., seemed sufficient to deliver the Directorate from all religious difficulties. An epoch of comparative tranquillity was heralded by the clause of separation, and though old laws against refractories and emigrants were not annulled, they for the time being remained in abeyance. Interests less domestic claimed the attention of the legislators, and it is said that up till the Fructidorian "coup d'état"* only twenty priests suffered death under the Directorate.† At Easter, 1796, the churches were crowded; priests had returned in considerable numbers, piety declared itself with boldness, and the Pope recommended the faithful to submit to the civil power if there were no longer any question of the Civil Constitution. By midsummer it was calculated that 38,000 parishes had resumed their old religion.

Fresh complications arose with the new

* September 5, 1797. † July 15, 1796.

elections to the Directorate and Legislative Body in the spring of 1797. Two hundred and sixteen members retired, most of whom offered themselves for re-election ; but only eleven of their number were returned, which upset the balance of power, and gave the Constitutionalists a majority in the Assembly of the Ancients and of the Five Hundred. The Directors, who were Conventionalists, found themselves face to face with a hostile and, as they feared, a royalist legislative ; so they planned a "coup d'état" to bring themselves back into power. Assured from Italy of the sympathetic support of Bonaparte, they, with the assistance of troops under General Augereau, intimidated both Houses into annulling the recent elections and empowering the Directors to nominate men to the vacancies so created. The assumption of dictatorship by such men as Larévellière-Lepeaux, Rewbell, and Barras, was the prelude to unlimited persecution. In order to destroy what they considered the hideous dangers to the State of royalism and clericalism, they resorted to the summary methods of the Terror ; and the treatment of the displaced deputies foreshadowed the kind of justice that was to be

meted out to priests—that of the "guillotine sèche." Fifty-three deputies were condemned to transportation for being associated in royalist conspiracies. The majority escaped, but six members of the Ancients, five of the Five Hundred, and six other men were taken from the Temple and driven for thirteen days across France in four iron cages to Rochefort, exposed like wild beasts to the curiosity of the people. Thence they were shipped on a seven weeks' voyage to Cayenne, and there deposited to encamp by the banks of the Conamana, where the observance of Quintidi and Décadi was enforced on them.

Before Sir Edward Pellew and other English sea captains had made it unsafe to transport priests to over-sea prisons, several horrible journeys had been made, of which records are left. On one journey seven priests died of suffocation, and when after a fifty-four days' voyage port was sighted, the ships were left anchored off the shore for days in the tropic sun while the crew went holiday-making on shore. On land they were tortured by insects, badly fed, and a prey to fever, and their lives by the banks of an unhealthy river were more

terrible than those of their predecessors in the Conciergerie. Inspired by the Directors, the "Moniteur" made out their place of detention as an earthly paradise.* "C'est dans les lieux les plus sains et les plus fertiles, que les deportés ont été placés. Ils habitent près la rivière Conamana."

The Directorate was most thorough in its attempt to suppress Catholic practices; it made the observance of Décadi and Quintidi compulsory, and in two years authorised over 8000 arrests for deportation, but a relatively small number of these sentences were put into execution. It forced men to work on Sundays, and tried to prohibit the sale of fish on Fridays. Convinced that only that is thoroughly destroyed which is replaced, they encouraged Theophilanthropy. The Minister of the Interior distributed a "Manuel des Théophilanthropes" in the departments, and made State grants to the society. The Theophilanthropists were an enlightened body, excluding no religion, and only meeting to promote morality. Readings and homilies on tolerance, truth, filial piety, and probity in commerce were held by them,

* December 14, 1798.

and in the centre of their temple stood an altar on which fruit and flowers were laid according to season, while maxims of virtue decorated their walls. Their cult had been founded by an English Deist, David Williams, in 1766, and in their ranks in France were numbered Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, M. J. Chénier, the painter David, and other notable people. Up till the eighteenth Fructidor they had existed, as it were, in theory; but after that date they existed in active practice. Noble in idea and sentiment, their worship and ceremonial soon degenerated with use into a ribald travesty of itself. The report of an official shows to what baseness secular religion could descend.

"Au temple de la Paix (2) X^me^ arrondissement, pendant la célébration des mariages, il y régnait un bruit confus qui rendait inutile toute lecture ou discours adressés au peuple. L'orchestre surtout contribuait au désordre par un choix d'aires propres à faire rire. Un noir se maria avec une blanche. On exécuta l'air d'Azémia.

L'ivoire avec l'ébène
Fait de jolis bijoux.

* * * *

Aussitôt le temple rétentit des cris de 'Bis' et de 'Bravo' comme une salle de comédie. Une vieille femme épousa un homme plus jeune qu'elle; la musique joua cet air du 'Prisonnier.'

> Vieille femme, jeune mari,
> Feront toujours mauvais ménage.

Les bruyantes acclamations redoublèrent, ainsi que la confusion des nouveaux époux." *

"Fêtes Décadaires" were instituted, and the Commune of Paris arranged that churches already restored to Catholicism should be at the disposal of the State for the whole morning on the Décadi, and that on these occasions all emblems of the Christian faith were to be veiled. It was decided that fifteen churches should be rebaptized as "temples décadaires." Saint-Roch, for example, became the Temple du Génie, because it held the tomb of Corneille; Saint-Eustache, because it was near Les Halles, was the Temple de l'Agriculture; Saint-Sulpice, which became the Temple de la Victoire, was, owing to its dedication, the scene of the famous banquet on the evening of Brumaire.

* "Haumont au Ministre de l'intérieur," 11 Ther. an VIII. F.I.C., Series 25.

With Brumaire came a great uplifting of hearts, for Bonaparte, the child of the Revolution, was believed to be the champion of true liberty. All laws of deportation were repealed, and it was permitted to open churches on other feasts than the Décadi. Though the Republican Kalendar was still the legal kalendar, the Gregorian came once more into use, and the observance of Décadi became gradually restricted to the official world. Numbers of shops dared to close on Sundays. Some closed both on Décadi and Sunday to please all customers.

Six churches in Paris, including Notre-Dame and Saint-Sulpice, were served by Constitutionals, and the rest by non-conformists. The scene of the massacres, l'Église des Carmes, was much frequented, and so was Saint-Roch, where Madame Récamier collected the alms. Clergy slowly resumed their distinguishing habit, and superiors like M. Émery began to re-assemble their seminarists. It was calculated that there were about 15,000,000 professing Catholics in France, 17,000,000 Free-thinkers, and 3,000,000 Protestants, Jews and Theophilanthropists, all of whom were at last free to believe what they pleased. Everything seemed to be tending

towards a full realisation of liberty of worship and liberty of conscience, and what Robespierre had called "the alliance between sceptre and censer" seemed for ever done away. For two years men thought that the day of freedom had in truth dawned. Catholicism, since it was separated from the State, would grow and rule by spiritual, not political power. Protestantism was allowed to flourish and spread its spirit of self-reliance and inquiry. Jews were recognised as citizens, and black men as voters. Men seemed to be entering at length the promised land of liberty and love.

The Concordat dispelled such illusions. The Catholic Church, in spite of its despoilment, had still a great advantage over other religions, for when all other forms of society were in process of solution it remained rigid and unchanged in composition, and though its elements were scattered over the face of the earth they were ready to fly back like steel filings to the magnet at the commanding word. Napoleon determined to make her advantage his own ; but though he wished her to retain her venerable character in the eyes of the world, he intended himself to be the master mind which directed her policy. The

world knows how in this matter he, in over-estimating the power which the Organic Articles would confer upon the State, made what he afterwards was heard to call *the* mistake of his administration. Anxious to take no false step in the great negotiation, he proceeded as a preliminary measure to acquaint himself with the history of the relationship of the Gallican Church to Rome. He caused the works of Bossuet, that great upholder of French liberties, to be translated from the Latin, and had himself carefully instructed in their purport and tendency. Then, after much deliberation, the new Pact was drawn up. Many difficulties had to be overcome, since the old Civil Constitution of 1790, with the democratic element eliminated, was to be the basis of the new Concordat. The Pope was to be coerced into acknowledging the validity of the Constitutional orders; he was to promise sanction to future nominations to bishoprics, and to a redistribution of dioceses and parishes; he was to confirm the Catholic Church in France, not as the only State religion, but as one of the several subsidised creeds; and he was to sanction the Church disendowment of 1791. It required all Napoleon's ingenuity and

firmness to push the matter through. Again and again it appeared as if negotiations would be broken off, but after endless discussion and wrangling Consalvi and Joseph Bonaparte signed the Concordat on July 15, 1801. In conformity with his centralised system of government, Napoleon arranged that all bishops were to be nominated by the First Consul and not elected as had been the scheme in the Civil Constitution; and that all were personally to swear allegiance to the State in the person of the First Consul. It had been arranged that on the redistribution of dioceses all bishops should resign their sees, and Napoleon insisted on nominating at least ten members of the new episcopate from among Constitutional priests. In spite of the signature of the Concordat, one difficulty remained to be overcome—that of persuading the Pope and his advisers to acknowledge Constitutional orders. It was not till near Easter, 1802, when Napoleon's patience was almost exhausted, that a "via media" was discovered which saved the honour of both parties. The Constitutionals refused to retract in public, and the Pope could not make terms with them unless they did retract.

It was arranged, therefore, that if they would abjure their errors privately before two witnesses they would be regarded as within the true fold once again. Bernier undertook to see to this matter, and though he only had one day in which to accomplish the work he certified that all the Constitutionals had retracted. D'Haussonville denies the alleged retractation, and avers that the certificate was drawn up so that the peace might be concluded, and that it was a mere form in which no party, not even the Roman Legate, was deceived. All Catholics did not admire Papal tactics, and a rhyme was bandied about in Italy and France that revealed popular opinion :

Pio [VI.], per conservar la fede,
Perde la sede.
Pio [VII.], per conservar la sede,
Perde la fede.

The Concordat left the civil power master of the functionary clergy, for they were salaried and bound to conform to any edicts that might at any time be deemed necessary for the greater tranquillity of the State. The famous "Organic Articles" determined that the Holy Father should not send an address to the faithful

without its being countersigned by Government; that no council or diocesan synod could be held without Government sanction; that bishops should not be allowed to leave their dioceses without the consent of the First Consul; that seminarists should be taught the declaration of 1682; and that the secular clergy should be kept in good order.

The attitude of the Church to Bonaparte can only be called abject. He was honoured in the most fulsome way by the clergy, and received such homage in entering a church that he felt as if he were in his own palace. His famous Catechism was approved at Rome and ordered to be used in all dioceses. The Papal Legate, in his circular to the clergy, instituted a "fête de Napoléon" for August 15, for had the great ruler not imitated Cyrus and Darius in restoring the house of God? The priests at one church porch received him, singing "Ecce mitto angelum meum, qui præ parabit viam meam." A review of the second edition of Chateaubriand's "Génie du Christianisme," which was dedicated to the restorer of the Church, appeared by consular command on Easter morning.

As the "Te Deum" that closed the Revolution reverberated through the aisles of Notre-Dame, thoughts of the many valiant men who, since the singing of the "Veni Creator" at Versailles, had died to destroy what Napoleon seemed about to rebuild, surged through the minds of the onlookers.

Grégoire summed up the situation in a few contemptuous words:

"Tous les motifs de soumission, toutes les preuves que vous alléguez en faveur du Concordat sont précisément celles dont nous nous servîmes pour établir qu'il fallait accepter la Constitution civile. . . . Vous avez mis l'Europe en feu, attisé la guerre extérieure et intérieure, causé des massacres, des persécutions, pour faire dix ans plus tard ce que nous fîmes dix ans plus tôt." *

Thirteen years had passed, and it seemed to contemporaries as though religious legislation had revolved in a vicious circle, only to end where it began. Men marvelled that all the persecution, pillage, and debate of those unutterable

* Champion, "La Séparation de l'Église et de l'État en 1792," p. 166.

years had effected so small a change in ideas and so unnoticeable an effect in national habits. Now, through the telescope of a century, it is possible to see that the experimental enactments of those days did embody the earnest of progress and reformation. Though the early revolutionaries suffered blame from the philosophers for their timidity, and from the clerics for their boldness, no one praises them for the moderation with which they approached questions of religious reform. The abolition of tithes was a measure forced on them by the people; out of the debate on this measure grew the scheme for disendowment; and since the property of the Church was to be administered by the State, out of disendowment grew the Civil Constitution of the Clergy and the subsidiary question of the suppression of the religious orders. Disendowment, in the first instance, was not intended to be the "criminal spoliation" which clerical writers have called it; rather was it the only avenue of administrative reform open to the Assembly. Though it was a step precipitated and, unfortunately, palliated by financial exigencies, it was not caused by them, and if the Civil Constitution had proved

a working success and all the charities and proposed pensions had been administered by the Government, the profits of the State would have been small, which seems to prove that the promoters of the scheme were not entirely actuated, as has been too often suggested, by motives of impiety and greed. When the clergy and the faithful had been consolidated by the application of the Civil Constitution into an obdurate opposition, persecution, spoliation, and crime of all kinds embittered the estrangement of Catholics and revolutionaries, and brought about, after five years of internecine strife, the abolition of the Budget of Public Worship. From the moment that the nation decided to subsidise no creed, Catholicism was theoretically free to disseminate itself once more throughout the land, and, except for the terrible Fructidorian persecution of 1797, was able slowly and quietly to resume its sway over the towns and villages of France. Churches were cleared of rubble; altars were reconsecrated; the hanging lamp was rekindled in ten thousand chancels, and the Holy Sacrifice was offered openly and without fear. Though aspiration had lured France toward the future, custom had enchained

her to the past, and the time of her complete emancipation was distantly postponed by Napoleon's pact with the Pope. The Liberals who attended the Feast of the Concordat feared that they were assisting at the rehabilitation of the evils of intolerance and tyranny. To their descendants, who have lived to see that the empire of the Church over France was by the Revolution mortally enfeebled, it must remain an open question whether the great gains of religious liberty and tolerance have ever yet been won.

MADAME DE STAËL AND NAPOLEON: A STUDY IN IDEALS

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HOWEVER well acquainted men may be with the facts of history, they are not often intimate with its emotions. The interest in occurrences is not paralleled in strength or popularity by a corresponding interest in enthusiasms, and though some try in dealing with history to feel, as well as to think and see, that sympathy is always rare which can be fired by ideals long discarded and by faiths long dead. The French Revolution is for many minds but a catalogue of unsuccessful experiments in reform, and in the present day of disillusion it is difficult to realise with any adequate intensity the grandeur and sanctity of the ideals that lay behind that strange series of events. Now that eyes no longer see a resplendent vision in the future of democracy; now that minds no longer expect the millennium in the enfranchisement of man, it is hard even to imagine the attitude of those

revolutionary leaders who thought by their doctrines to bring about the kingdom of heaven upon earth. In France in the year 1789 men seemed, as it were, intoxicated with the thought of their own perfectibility. It was as though an ecstasy had come upon the soul of the French nation, as though a voice had spoken from the clouds, bidding men to rise and make the great ascent towards perfection.

The Great Revolution began in no selfish scramble for possessions, for its pioneers had their gaze riveted on nobler and less corruptible gains. The movement was in its inception spiritual; men were at first desirous, not of material rights, but of ideal rights; and it must be remembered that the axe was not, at the beginning, laid to the root of the ancient tree of Feudalism, under whose dim shadows the people had existed for so long. The nation that had sat in darkness had seen a great light, and though centuries of despotic years had made men unfit for democracy, yet they were eager with the eagerness of inspiration to rise and live according to the words that rang so grandly in the air, Freedom, Equality, Fraternity! Born of fear and disappointment was the

later rage for destruction and blood, for the love-feasts of the federated bear witness to the spirit in which before the day of disillusion the great ascension was attempted. The first revolutionaries acted on the hypothesis that man was born good ; that it was only necessary to break down the conventional social barriers to let goodness everywhere prevail. The glad festivals and joyous dances of the "fédérés," in which Wordsworth took part as he journeyed down the Rhône, seemed almost to justify such an assumption. But when the moment of ecstasy was past, and the idealists found that their principles were not accepted by every one ; that their hopes were by many considered vain, they, like the Inquisitors of Spain, did not lose faith in their own tenets, but assumed those who did not agree with them to be in mortal sin and worthy of death. Their hearts hardened, and they began to violate the liberty they preached. The oppression and cruelty characterising the second phase of Revolution, which destroyed the Monarchy, but did not establish the Republic, remain a dire and discouraging monument to the betrayal of ideals in precipitate action.

After ten years of empirical government a sudden end was put to all the theories and visions in which the Revolution had had its origin, no less than to the inefficient administration of the Directorate, by the man of marble—Bonaparte. Already, while commanding in Italy, the Corsican general had shown the home government that he was possessed of an independent and arbitrary temper, for he pursued his own policy, and would submit to no dictation from his official superiors. During the first Italian campaign he became acutely conscious of his own great personality ; he said of himself that every day he seemed to see before him new possibilities and new horizons. His imperious character made itself even more apparent in Egypt. There, in his contact with the East, he lost all remnants of his earlier beliefs in the goodness of men. "Savage man is but a dog" was the grim axiom in which he summed up his experience. On his return to France from the Nile, he requested the Ancients to promise that his next command should be that of Paris. To all outward appearance he held himself aloof from political affairs ; indeed, up till the *coup d'état* of the 18th Brumaire,

he kept silence in such matters, and seemed more interested in the mystery and worship of the Egyptian temples he had so lately left than in the anarchy in which his country was engulfed.

The state of France was at the time appalling to contemplate: the nearly impassable roads were infested with robbers, and the crumbling walls of the prisons offered no security against crime; the hospitals were hotbeds of disease, and, owing to lack of funds, many sick of various contagious diseases were turned loose on to the streets; agriculture was disorganised; elementary education hardly existed; the national credit was low. The condition of the capital may be summed up in the one word—chaos. Not a house was in repair, many in fact were in ruins; leaden roofs as well as panels and doors of wood had been removed and sold by the new acquirers of national property; the streets were dirty—not a few of them were no better than open sewers; it was not uncommon in the dawn to find dead bodies in the roadway; crimes of violence were made easy, for street-lighting was as much neglected as every other detail of municipal administration. The people

passionately pursued amusement, and took but faint interest in political life. Insanity, owing to the unstable condition of affairs, had greatly increased, while the population of Paris had, in ten years, dwindled by about one hundred thousand souls.

On every side men were confronted by an intricate tangle of unadministered affairs. The orderly warp and woof of old French life was gone. Amidst the confusion of bankruptcy, agiotage, paganism and crime, it required a genius to discern the strands of vigorous and enduring quality, capable of being woven into a new texture of state. No one guessed that the short dark soldier moving silently and unobserved among the fortifications and barracks and museums of Paris was the only man who saw the situation as it really was, or who was capable of seizing the opportunity of reducing chaos to order.

The difference between the Faith of 1789, in which the Revolution had its origin, and the Common Sense of 1800, in which the Revolution had its end, is as wide as the space between stars and earth. The measure of that difference may be expressed in two terms, Madame de

Staël and the First Consul. The war of words and deeds carried on by these protagonists from the Consulate to the capitulation of Paris is a study of captivating interest. It was far more than an enmity between two individuals: it was the conflict of two epochs of the Revolution—1789 and 1800. Each champion transcended the limits of personality in so far as they represented converse sequences of ideas and opposed philosophies of life. Madame de Staël stood for Rousseauism, for faith in the innate goodness and perfectibility of man, for belief in liberty as the first condition of progress for humanity. Bonaparte contemptuously nicknamed her, and those who agreed with her, "Idéologues," but with ready wit she called him "Idéophobe," and so had the best of the encounter. The First Consul, though he exploited the doctrine of individual rights to the last degree, was in himself the reaction against Rousseau's idealism, for he looked upon the human race as a subject for the "experiments of genius"—as raw material for the manufacture of empires.

Madame de Staël kept a record of her struggle with Bonaparte; a few years ago, after the lapse of nearly a century, the

authentic text of her manuscript, "Dix Années d'Exil," was given to an indifferent world. But that book, which of old had been pictured as the torch of an incendiary, produced no conflagration. The transient interest of curiosity evoked by it in no way reflected the white heat of the furnace at which it had been kindled. Throughout the nineteenth century the book had been withheld from the public, except in mutilated form. Diplomatically deleted by Baron de Staël, it was first published two months after Napoleon's death, and reprints of this emasculated edition appeared at intervals during the fifty years following. Although, to readers of imaginative sympathy, it is still a living book, it is a failure in so far as it missed its mark, and the chagrin of its author may be guessed at when it is observed how great were the precautions taken by her to prevent its destruction. Three copies of the manuscript exist at Château Coppet: one in Madame de Staël's straggling and unpunctuated writing; another in the writing of Miss Randall, English governess to Albertine de Staël; and a third, in Madame de Staël's hand, which, for fear the police should seize the other two,

was entitled "Extrait de Mémoires inédits du temps de la Reine Elisabeth en Angleterre. Tiré d'un manuscrit de la Bibliothèque d'Edinburgh." In this last copy, Napoleon sometimes figures as Charles II. and sometimes as Elizabeth; the Duc d'Enghien is Mary Stuart; Savary is Lord Kent; Schlegel is M. William; Necker is "my wife." The book was begun in 1800, and broken off at M. Necker's death in 1804. It was resumed in 1810 under great provocation (the destruction of "De l'Allemagne"), and stopped altogether on the writer's arrival in Sweden in 1812. No one knew when the book would see the light; it was merely written "to remind the men of a future age how it was possible to suffer under the yoke of oppression." The book represents a lively experience, and is not altogether, as some critics have suggested, the product of imaginative hate. Rather does it appear to be the eloquent cry of a suppressed party, great in the nobility of its ideas and sincere in its love of liberty. "The Apologists for Bonapartism have been so numerous that it is well for us to realise how, under that magnificent visible world there lay an invisible underworld of

moral poverty and debasement of character, which were the direct results of despotism."

It has been the fashion to impute mean motives to Madame de Staël in her feud against Bonaparte. Such an imputation seems barely justifiable. No doubt, as a woman, she was piqued by his rudeness and contempt, but that was far from being the cause of her opposition. She was ever ready to sink personal considerations in her enthusiasm for morality and justice, and it is not easy to prove that she was an unworthy champion of the causes she espoused. Bitterly as she opposed his system of administration under the Consulate and Empire, she never seems to have hated Bonaparte as a man. Indeed, it is doubtful whether the early admiration which his colossal vitality and ability compelled in her was ever completely extinguished.

The opening words of "Dix Années d'Exil" are not without nobility, and serve to explain her attitude of mind.

"Ce n'est point pour occuper le public de moi que j'ai résolu de raconter les circonstances de dix années d'exil ; les malheurs que j'ai

éprouvés, avec quelque amertume que je les aie sentis, sont si peu de chose au milieu des désastres publics dont nous sommes témoins, qu'on aurait honte de parler de soi, si les événements qui nous concernent n'étaient pas liés à la grande cause de l'humanité menacée. L'Empereur Napoléon, dont le caractère se montre tout entier dans chaque trait de sa vie, m'a persécutée avec un soin minutieux, avec une activité toujours croissante, avec une rudesse inflexible ; et mes rapports avec lui ont servi à me le faire connaître, longtemps avant que l'Europe eût appris le mot de cette énigme, et lorsqu'elle se laissait dévorer par le sphinx, faute d'avoir su le deviner."

Divergent as were the mature views of Madame de Staël and Napoleon, in early life their enthusiasms had been the same. Both had come under the influence, it might almost be called the domination, of Rousseau's ideas, ideas which, towards the end of the eighteenth century, laid hold, like some dæmonic force, of old and young, peasant and aristocrat alike. Bonaparte, like many of his contemporaries in Italy, Germany, and France,

began life as a sentimentalist and dreamer who thought much of the sufferings of men and dwelt deeply on the problem of how to make happiness, which followers of Rousseau thought the goal of life, attainable for all. Like Werther, he admired the nebulous Ossian, and by the banks of the Nile read Madame de Staël's treatise "De l'Influence des Passions" with interest. Garat called him "a philosopher leading armies." No one in the early days guessed how soon the philosophic mantle was to be exchanged for the mail coat of tyranny.

Both Bonaparte and Madame de Staël at different times visited the grave of that unworthy sage who had inspired thousands, and on whose doctrines had been founded the new code of human liberty. In comparing the accounts of these two pilgrimages we imprint an indelible picture on our memories. Stanislas de Girardin relates that Bonaparte, on his visit to the tomb of Rousseau, said, "'It would have been better for the repose of France that this man had never been born.' 'Why, First Consul?' said I. 'He prepared the French Revolution. I thought it was not for you to complain of the Revolution.' 'Well,' he

replied, 'the future will show whether it would not have been better for the repose of the world that neither I nor Rousseau had existed.'" In a conversation with Roederer, he once said: "The more I read Voltaire, the more I like him; he is always reasonable, never a charlatan, never a fanatic: he is made for mature minds. . . . I have been especially disgusted with Rousseau since I have seen the East."

Madame de Staël's early enthusiasm suffered no similar change. To her Rousseau remained an inspiration. She describes a visit made in girlhood to the shrine at Ermenonville:

"His funeral urn is placed in an island; it is not unintentionally approached, and the religious sentiment which induces the traveller to cross the lake by which it is surrounded proves him to be worthy of carrying thither his offering. I strewed no flowers upon his melancholy tomb, but I contemplated it for a long time, my eyes suffused with tears: I quitted it in silence, and remained in the most profound meditation."

The Revolutionaries of the National Con-

vention regarded Rousseau as their saviour, and an oration made by Lakanal in that assembly begging the citizens to take the ashes of the great liberator out of their lonely grave, and inter them in the Panthéon embodies the general sentiment of that day. "Honour in him the beneficent genius of humanity; honour the friend, the defender, the apostle of liberty; the promoter of the rights of man, the eloquent forerunner of this Revolution which you are asked to consummate for the happiness of the nations." Men's hearts vibrated in response to this appeal: the reformer's remains were carried with circumstance and veneration to the Panthéon: and his miserable Thérèse was granted an annuity out of the public funds. Not only was Rousseau their present saviour, he was also to be their future religion. It was not proposed that the Panthéon should for long contain the sacred relics. For some while it had been intended that a vast plantation of trees should be made round the Temple of Great Men, "whose silent shade would enhance the religious sentiment of the place." In this august wood a grove of poplars was to surround the monument to the author of "Émile," in

remembrance of the earlier burial-place in the lake of Ermenonville, "for that melancholy tree," since it had stood sentinel at his dissolution, "had become inseparable from the idea of his tomb."

In 1799 Madame de Staël was but one out of the many lovers of progress who believed in Bonaparte as the hope of down-trodden humanity. In him she saw the man who was to put the seal to the magnificent promise of the early Revolution. How could she guess that the campaign in Egypt, which had so fired her imagination, had cured him of any lingering belief in Rousseau's theories? Like the majority of people in Paris, she was ignorant of the opinions Bonaparte at this time held on men and politics. He was known only as a military genius, not as a civil administrator, and it was vaguely and popularly supposed that he, the child of the Revolution, would take his stand on its three great principles. All the hopes of all the friends of progress were, on this hypothesis, concentrated in him. He was to the Liberals of Europe at that moment as the day-star of hope. Against the horizon of the dawning century, he stood illumined as

a herald of better days and diviner deeds. At his feet, the patriot, the lover of progress, the searcher after truth, the poet, the philosopher, were ready to kneel, as they would not have knelt to any saint. His was the figure to whom the prayers of thousands went up as to a great deliverer: from Prussia, still iron-bound by the legacy of Frederick the Great; from the principalities of the Holy Roman Empire; from Italy, toiling under the Austrian yoke; from Greece, the fief of Turkey; from all who groaned under the old evils of military, feudal, or ecclesiastical despotism. He was the hero who was to fulfil the heroic ideals of the Revolution, who was to become the missioner of the new freedom. This was the rôle for which many had cast him; was the rôle he never accepted. His new-found destiny enshrined the disappointment in Europe of countless hopes and aspirations.

None of those who assisted in the *coup a'état* of the 18th Brumaire knew that they were founding an Empire. Bonaparte's speech before the Council of the Ancients on the day of his election to the Consulate was disarming. "Citizens, the Republic was on the point of

perishing; your decree has saved it. We will have the Republic. We will have it founded on genuine liberty, on the representative system." And later he said once more to the Ancients: "People talk of a new Cromwell, of a new Cæsar. Citizens, had I aimed at such a part it would have been easy for me to assume it on my return from Italy, in the moment of my most glorious triumph, when the army and the parties invited me to seize it. I aspired not to it then. I aspire not to it now." With mild words he began his campaign against liberty. He himself proclaimed that his desire was "to close the wounds of France." There were to be no more scaffolds, and no more exiles; the churches were to be re-opened, and peace was to reign in the land. Dominical observance once more became the recognised national practice, and the dull decadian festivals were forgotten in an access of new piety. Every one was sick of theories and principles, and philosophers were blamed for all that had happened. Disillusion was the malady of the moment. Ideas were at a discount, and their domination considered hardly less galling than that of the old feudality. People were tired of

a liberty which in practice meant anarchy, and of a brotherhood which had become the symbol of bankruptcy.

In crises, men are apt to choose the one dictator rather than the multitude of councillors. Calvin was called upon to save Geneva; Cromwell to emancipate England. In 1799 Bonaparte was the necessary man for France. He alone could reconstruct the country from the ruins of her past. His polity resembled that of the Catholic Church in so far as it aimed at introducing the outward husk and semblance of democracy, while retaining the reality of autocracy as the kernel of his constitution. In proportion as his grasp upon the administration became more assured, and government became more despotic, the hearts of the Liberals grew sick with hope deferred; their aspirations were choked; their dreams were dissipated. "This very world, which is the world of all of us," no longer held the revelation; the stars no longer visited the earth.

The First Consul brought men back to facts. For him the right of man meant the might of man, and in practice the might of one man. Ordinary people he believed to be in no way fit

to govern themselves; the anarchic condition of France abundantly demonstrated the futility of such a notion. He merely expressed the unconscious opinion of many to whom it had long become evident that a people is not suddenly lifted up from serfdom to authority; that a nation of slaves is not inspired as if by some divine afflatus with the virtues of free and responsible citizens. Visions of the immediate apotheosis of man, cherished in the Revolution's dawn, had gone like a shadow, not even as the shadow of reality, but as the shadow of a dream. Government for the people by the people was seen to involve a laborious educational course on which men were hardly at the time prepared to enter. Let the Liberals cherish what faith in humanity they chose; Bonaparte was not under the pleasing delusion that man was ready for self-government. He believed Rousseauism and romanticism to make for bad government, and absolutism to be the ideal constitution. The sum of the administrative system of the Consulate is too familiar to be dwelt upon. In theory the liberty of the nation was guaranteed by representation based on manhood suffrage. In practice the First Consul

became a dictator. He was supported by a Council of State, the Legislative Assembly, and the Tribunate. These bodies formulated, discussed, and voted upon the laws. Both the Council and the Tribunate sent three members to represent their views to the Legislative Assembly. Besides these three bodies, there was a Senate whose business was to " maintain or annul all acts which are reported to it as unconstitutional by the Tribunate or the Government." The Senate, in the first instance selected by the Consuls (though later co-opting fresh members according to its own discretion), selected in its turn from lists presented by the electors, the members of the Tribunate and of the Legislative Assembly. The presidents of the Cantonal Assemblies, who really controlled the electorate, were chosen by the First Consul from amongst candidates submitted from the cantons. This centralised method of administration made it comparatively easy for Bonaparte to impress his whole will upon the nation, and to subordinate the welfare of the individual to the perfecting of the State-machine.

The reign of the First Consul had barely

opened when Madame de Staël began to be agitated by doubts as to Bonaparte's love of liberty. Without waiting for decided acts of tyranny, she set herself in opposition to what she believed to be his tendency. He asked why she could not attach herself to his government, and wondered whether she wanted anything from him; possibly the money her father, M. Necker, had lent to the State, or perhaps a residence in Paris? He informed her that she might have anything she wished. "It does not matter what I 'wish,' but what I think," she answered, thus throwing down the challenge to the greatest of men. To one who believed every man to have his price, it came as something of a shock to find that a mere woman was ready to fight, not for advantage but for an ideal. Madame de Staël's political mouthpiece, Benjamin Constant, made what stand he could against the introduction of absolutism, and in a great speech to the Tribunes reclaimed for their body the independence necessary for its usefulness. Without such independence, he declared, "there would be nothing but slavery and silence, silence which the whole of Europe would hear." He appeared to hurl defiance at

the First Consul, who was greatly incensed. As a consequence, the press attacked both Madame de Staël and Benjamin Constant with violence. She was represented as the agent of an Orleanist and clerical conspiracy, and an article in the "Peuple" ended in this conciliatory fashion: "Ce n'est pas votre faute si vous êtes laide; mais c'est votre faute si vous êtes intrigante."

Not only the Jacobin, but also the Royalist press was ranged against her. They called her Curchodine (her mother's maiden name had been Curchod), and twitted her with running after glory and people in high positions; with writing on metaphysics, which she did not understand; on morality, which she did not practise; and on the virtues of her sex, which she did not possess. Undaunted by this attack and by the cold behaviour of those in society, who desired the favour of Bonaparte, she wrote a defence of theorists and philosophers. Though the First Consul was inclined to make liberty answerable for all the crimes committed in its name, she at least was anxious to prove herself able to distinguish the beauty of the pure ideal from its caricature in practical life. In "De la Littérature considérée dans ses rapports avec les Insti-

tutions sociales," she made an act of faith, "of inextinguishable faith," in the law of progress, in the Rousseau view of life, in the perfectibility of man. It was a magnificent effort, in which she traced the progress of the spirit of man from the days of Homer down to the year 1789. She confessed how in her pride she had regarded that still recent and momentous year as a new epoch for man, and admitted her present fear that in sober reality it may have been nothing more than a "terrible event." Though ideals had disappeared in that red harvest of lives, characters, sentiments, and ideas, she asserted she could never believe that philosophy to be false which declares for the progress of the race. Life without such hope of future ennoblement would be but a vain and arid waste. Fontanés observed that this book presented "la chimère d'une perfection qu'on cherche maintenant à opposer à ce qui est."

Factions, jealousies, and class hatreds have often merged themselves in enthusiasm for a common cause. A national enemy unites the conflicting interests of a country more securely than any constitution, however just. Bonaparte welcomed the idea of the Italian campaign in

1800, for it would, if successful, contribute to his firmer establishment, and glorify him in the eyes of the French people. On his way to Italy he called on M. Necker at Coppet. Madame de Staël was greatly impressed on this occasion by his conversation and his personality, and could not understand her father's indifference to the great man. Her romantic and generous nature was stirred, and even in the tyrant she could see the hero. The glamour of meeting the man of destiny face to face, for the moment dispelled her antipathy for all that he represented. During the lengthening spring evenings by the Lake of Geneva, she watched, after he had gone, the spectacle of the French troops advancing across the peaceful country towards the great St. Bernard Pass, and only faintly wished that he might be defeated, so that his growing tyranny should receive a check. However, after Marengo the victorious general, "bruni par la gloire," returned to Paris to receive the plaudits of the people, and Madame de Staël showed herself as anxious to see the popular hero as all the rest of the world.

The progress of absolutism became more rapid after this successful Italian campaign, for

the process known as the "sénatus-consulte" was grafted on to the existing constitution, and by this means the consular will immediately became the nation's law. The "sénatus-consulte" was ostensibly adopted for the purpose of punishing and terrorising those who schemed against Bonaparte's administration, and the first use to which the new measure was put was to deport a number of Jacobins (said to be concerned in an attempt to assassinate the First Consul) to the Seychelles, Cayenne, and other places. The list of a hundred and thirty names was drawn up in a hasty and careless fashion, and it was never proved that any of the men banished were in any way concerned with the plot. Madame de Staël was very indignant, and surmised that after such a precedent any act of tyranny might be justified. In January 1802 another unconstitutional act was executed. Benjamin Constant and nineteen others were turned out of the Tribunate, and twenty men devoted to Bonaparte were put in their place. Effective criticism was impossible, for public expression of opinion had been stifled by the suppression of all journals with the exception of thirteen (five of which soon disappeared) as

being inimical to the Republic. Had the Tribunate continued to exist as originally constituted, it might have proved a barrier to the assumption by the First Consul of absolute power.

The Peace of Amiens was a disturbing surprise to Madame de Staël. Andréossy, the French Envoy, who went to London to ratify the preliminaries of the peace, reported that the English people were delighted at the compact, and that the mob unharnessed his horses and dragged his carriage to St. James's Palace. Madame de Staël reflected sadly that, if England, the country of the free, recognised the usurper, no country in Europe could protest against his despotism.

Almost more disconcerting both to her and to the Liberals was the formal treaty made between State and Church three weeks after the Peace of Amiens. In order to celebrate the accomplishment of two such important pacts, Bonaparte arranged that a festival should be held in Notre-Dame. On Easter Day, 1802, the big bell of the cathedral broke its ten years' silence. Amid salvos of artillery and blare of trumpets the Consuls and the rest of the officers

of State went in pomp to the festival. It was observed by the curious that the consular lackeys for the first time wore livery, and that the consular coach was drawn by eight horses. Within the sacred walls so recently profaned by revolutionary usage Mass was celebrated, and at the Elevation the soldiers presented arms and the drums rolled. Two orchestras, conducted by Cherubini and Méhul, discoursed sacred music, and thus the terms of peace between State and Church were ratified. Madame de Staël remained shut up in her house "pour ne pas voir l'odieux spectacle," which for her was filled with remembrance of the old monarchic days, and the old insolence of royal luxury and oppression. She and all the friends of liberty in France were anxious that the Catholic religion should not be restored in their country. Individually she was, like Rousseau, anxious for a State religion, but it was "en bonne Calviniste," and though nominally the three Christian confessions and Judaism were put on the same footing by the Concordat, the only significant factor in the arrangement was Catholicism. Napoleon described religion as order, and there is no doubt that in the Catholic

priests he saw serviceable professors of passive obedience, a sort of "gendarmerie sacrée," that might with diplomacy be converted into one of the firmest pillars of his throne. It seems as if there must have been to his mind an essentially English savour in Protestantism; for when negotiating for the pacification of La Vendée he asked that twelve inhabitants of the district should be sent, "prêtres par préférence," with whom to treat. "Car j'aime et estime les prêtres, qui sont tous Français, et qui savent défendre la patrie contre les éternels ennemis du nom français, ces méchants hérétiques d'Anglais." Bonaparte always said it would have been easier for him to establish Protestantism, and that he had to overcome much resistance in restoring Catholicism as the State religion. The Council of State received the news of the compact in silence, and neither the Legislative Assembly nor the Tribunate would sanction the measure until their numbers had been reduced by expulsion. Men felt that by the Concordat "the most beneficial achievements of the Revolution were undone."

Madame de Staël began to desire some other weapon than her pen to fight the restoration of

Catholicism, and she thought that in the person of Bernadotte, who was insanely jealous of his master, she had found one. This General-in-Chief of the Army of the West affected liberal ideas and intrigued against Bonaparte. Not content with being in the thick of the conspiracy, Madame de Staël urged her colleagues to immediate action, as there was no time to be lost, since "forty thousand priests would be at the service of the tyrant on the morrow." The plot failed and Bernadotte escaped; but Bonaparte did not forget or forgive the conspirators.

In the late spring of 1802, Madame de Staël was delayed in her journey to Coppet by the death of her spendthrift husband at a wayside inn. His death was in many ways a relief to her, and with unchecked courage she continued her campaign against tyranny. Her enemy was about to become Consul for life, which caused her a good deal of anxious thought, and when a pamphlet named "Vrai Sens du Vote national sur le Consulat à vie" was printed by her friend Camille Jordan, giving expression to views of Bonaparte that coincided with her own, her pleasure on reading it was so extreme that she thought of rewarding the author by sending

him a ring made of her own hair, which had belonged to "pauvre M. de Staël." But luckily she remembered before it was too late that Camille was much taken by the fair curls of Madame de Krüdener, and her pride made her refrain from sending the black ring.

A month later another pamphlet appeared, again expressing her views. Its name was "Les dernières Vues de Politique et de Finances," and its author, M. Necker, allowed that Bonaparte was "l'homme nécessaire," and that the timely choice of a dictator had saved France from serious dangers. He criticised the constitution of the year VIII., traced in it the whole scaffolding of the future imperial edifice, and declared the present state of government to be but "the stepping-stone to tyranny." He complained that the Legislative Assembly, despoiled of its prerogatives, was unworthy of a free republic; and predicted, as his daughter had done in "De la Littérature," that the progress of military authority must lead to despotism, and that "good faith should prevent the keeping of the name Republic for a form of government in which the people would not count." It was a book bound to make trouble

for its author. Madame de Staël realised this but "could not bring herself to stifle the swan-song which was to sound from the grave of French liberty."

Every one knew that she was the power behind the book. In vain she protested that it was the work of M. Necker, and of M. Necker alone; no one believed her. The question, however, soon ceased to attract notice, for the election of Bonaparte to the Consulate for life dulled all interest in other concerns, and the poor hermit of Coppet was lost to sight in the joy with which the election was greeted. The Empire was accomplished in all but name.

By Lake Leman the temporarily forgotten woman lived lamenting the eclipse of her party. She tried to console herself with reading Kant. It rejoiced her to discover that in his works she could find new and noble arguments against despotism and degradation of character. Unlike her friend Chateaubriand, for whom Nature was the melodious harp on which the unfathomable misery of man was expressed, she had no joy in scenery or changing lights, and could only think and write. Her novel, "Delphine," appeared in December 1802,

in Paris, and she waited impatiently under the elms at Coppet for the echo of her success in the capital. Its vogue was prodigious, for most of the characters were drawn from life. Delphine was Madame de Staël; Madame de Vernon was Talleyrand; M. de Lebensei was Benjamin Constant; Thérèse d'Erviers was Madame Récamier; the Duc de Mendoce was M. Lucchesini, the Prussian ambassador in Paris. The book itself was dedicated to "La France Silencieuse." Talleyrand said, "On dit que Madame de Staël nous a représentés tous deux dans son roman, elle et moi, déguisés en femmes!" Even from the distant Lake of Geneva, arrows found their mark, and wounded their destined quarry. Bonaparte declared the book immoral, "vagabond in imagination," and a mere "mass of metaphysic and sentiment." "Delphine" championed Protestantism, and declared against the "bizarre beliefs of Catholicism." It praised the English, it exalted liberty; in short, it committed every possible offence against Napoleonic opinion. Madame de Genlis, whom André Chénier called "la mère de l'Église," was particularly angered by its heterodoxy. She also hated its

authoress, and took the opportunity of its publication to excite the First Consul against her and persuade him to exile her. When Madame de Staël arrived in Paris, the decree went forth, in spite of the pleading of her champion and friend, Joseph Bonaparte. Exile seemed to her as bitter as death itself, and of all the instruments of tyranny the worst. Heavy of heart she betook herself to Germany, to study its people and its literature. She had been much attracted to that country by her correspondence with Charles de Villers, and by her perusal of his translation of Kant's philosophy. During this new and absorbing experience, her diary of exile was suspended for six years. Shortly before her departure for Germany, she heard that the truce between France and England was broken, and remarked that Bonaparte had only signed the Peace of Amiens the better to prepare himself for war. That this was the general impression amongst statesmen cannot be doubted. Lord Whitworth regarded it as a truce, Pitt as a suspension of hostilities. In spite of the joy with which its ratification had been received in England, no one was under any illusion as to its durability.

Holland was the real bone of contention, though as a matter of fact no mention of Holland proper was made in the Peace of Amiens. It was stipulated that Ceylon should be ceded to England, and the Cape restored to the Dutch, but Addington did not insist that the independence of Holland should be recognised in this treaty. He thought that it was the logical conclusion of the general peace, and the mere execution of the Treaty of Lunéville, which expressly guaranteed the independence of the Batavian Republic. Bonaparte, who had not concluded the Treaty of Lunéville with England, thought he would only fulfil the agreements specified in the Peace of Amiens, and that he had no other obligations towards England. He evacuated Tarento, and therefore expected the English to do their share, and evacuate Malta. Whenever allusion was made to Holland by the English diplomatists, the French replied by talking of Malta. The English were civil and conciliatory: they did not want war. It was feared that the French did, and early in March 1803 it was announced to the faithful Commons that great preparations for war were being made in France and

Holland. Throughout the summer months Madame de Staël observed that flat-bottomed boats were being constructed in every forest in France, and by the side of many of the great roads. In Picardy a triumphal arch was erected bearing the words "route de Londres" upon it. Alarm was excited by the discovery of letters dealing with Napoleon's scheme for planting French commercial agents in the great commercial towns of England, although France at that time had no commercial treaty with England. A letter was intercepted, sent by order of the First Consul to the French commercial agent at Hull, asking for a detailed plan of that port and its approaches. Suspicions were aroused that these and other isolated discoveries were but threads in a great system of espionage, in which Bonaparte was endeavouring to involve England.

Soon after these alarming incidents, the celebrated scene between Lord Whitworth and the First Consul took place at the Tuileries. It was not imitated in England, for Andréossy was still received courteously by the Queen and Court. As the English Minister for Foreign Affairs stood by the spirit of the Treaty of

Lunéville, and Bonaparte by the letter of the Peace of Amiens, war was inevitable. It began in May with the capture of two French merchant vessels, whereupon all English people in France (and there were over a thousand) were thrown into prison by the First Consul. Lord Elgin was amongst those arrested, as well as Sir James Crawford and Lord Whitworth's secretary, Mandeville. Such arbitrary acts were said to be without precedent in modern history.

From this time forward, Napoleon's tendency to tyrannous abuse of power became more pronounced. The worst fears of Madame de Staël were realised. The sudden death of Pichegru, the banishment of Moreau, and the d'Enghien murder showed how unchecked was the course of his action either by his executive or by public opinion. The comedy of the Empire began to be played in 1804, and the attendance of the Pope at the ceremony of the coronation made it at least appear as though the murder of a royal Duke had been condoned by the Church. Order had been secured in France at the price of freedom ; the administrative system was working smoothly, the taxation of the country had been thoroughly reorganised,

the civil code composed, the press muzzled, the religions of the land restored. Napoleon had leisure at last to turn his serious attention to other countries.

In April 1804 Madame de Staël had been recalled from her study of the German nation by the news of her father's illness. He had been dead a week when she left Berlin; but this news was kept from her till she reached Weimar. His last days were troubled by the reflection that it was on account of the pamphlet "Les dernières Vues de Politique et de Finances" that his daughter was in exile. With dying hands he wrote to assure the First Consul that she had had nothing to do with the publication of the book; in fact, that she had urged him to refrain from giving it to the world. Madame de Staël felt certain that he would attend to a voice which came as it were from the grave; but Napoleon had long renounced sentiment, and merely said: "Elle a bien dû regretter son père. Pauvre divinité! Il n'y a jamais eu d'homme plus médiocre, avec son flon-flon, son importance et sa queue de chiffres." A rumour went about that all the exiled were to be recalled at the coronation.

Madame de Staël waited vainly at Coppet for the news of her pardon, which never came. It maddened her to find that nobles, like the Rohans, Montmorencys, and La Rochefoucaulds, were willing to take places at the Court of the "bourgeois of Ajaccio." She wrote to her old friend M. de Narbonne, in whose society her days at Juniper Hall, near Dorking, had been spent, reproaching him with his attitude towards Napoleon, and urging him to show more sense of personal dignity and more loyalty to his old masters. The letter fell into the hands of Fouché, chief of police, and Napoleon discovered that his assiduous enemy was actively trying a new method of undermining his throne. She fell into further disgrace, and after a tedious autumn, spent at Coppet, went to Italy. Italy disappointed her; she would have exchanged St. Peter's and the Colosseum, the frescoes of Michael Angelo and the statues of Greece, for a good constitution for her adored country. In Italy she found no real life, only the dream of a past beauty, existing under a blue sky. Dissatisfied with her impression, she returned, at the end of June, to Coppet, to write "Corinne." Napoleon

still kept himself informed of all she did and all she said, and while dictating the plan of the 1805 campaign to Daru, wrote to his untiring policeman, Fouché, that he is informed that Madame de Staël pretends she has his permit to re-enter Paris, but that he is not quite such an imbecile as to allow her to be within forty miles of Paris, when he himself will be at the other end of Europe.

From Coppet, Madame de Staël followed with intense interest the advance made by Napoleon's armies across the Continent. The liberty of many nations was threatened, but she remained silent, content, maybe, with the work she had already done, in sowing the seeds of Napoleonic hate and distrust in many territories and many hearts. It distressed her to hear that some of the smaller German rulers held other and more ignorant views of his dominion than her own. Some of them still thought, as she had done before the Consulate, that it would mean liberty and progress, and on the whole the buffer States along the Rhine were inclined to welcome the advent of a strong Liberal government, such as they conceived would be introduced by the French Emperor.

In consequence many of their inhabitants heard of the victory of Austerlitz and the Pressburg peace without dismay. The representative of one of the most noble and ancient families in the Holy Roman Empire, Karl von Dalberg, expressed his view of the situation in the following language to Napoleon :

"Sire, the genius of Napoleon should not confine itself to the happiness of France. Providence wills that superior men should be born for the whole world. The noble German nation groans under the evils of political and religious anarchy. Sire ! Be the regenerator of its constitution."

Ever since the year of Lunéville, Napoleon had drawn up endless plans for the reconstruction of Germany, and at this time he produced the Confederation of the Rhine, a document whereby fifteen princes of the Empire declared themselves "separated in perpetuity from the territories of the German Empire, and united among themselves in a particular confederation, called the Confederated States of the Rhine." This Rheinbund, having declared its independence of Imperial German control, called upon

the Emperor of Germany to renounce his title, and assume that of Emperor of Austria. In August the German Empire was declared by France to exist no longer.

Napoleon went so far with his plans of reconstruction as to urge Frederick William III. to form a North German Confederacy as a sort of set-off to the newly confederated Rhine Provinces. This advice exasperated the King, and Prussia at last arose from eleven years of inglorious neutrality, and went to war.

The French Emperor was so fully informed as to the state of Prussian civil and military administration that he wrote to Talleyrand: "The idea that Prussia will attack us single-handed is so ridiculous that it deserves no further notice." The direct result of the revolt of Prussia was the defeat of Jena and the occupation of Berlin. The secondary result was that the conquest revealed Prussia to herself, and discovered to her that it lay within her power to become the dominant factor in the eventual confederation of the German-speaking peoples.

People of thought in Germany had, in the eighteenth century, been constrained to seek for

progress outside their own country. Madame de Staël, in her journey through Germany, was surprised at the knowledge of French liberalism to be found amongst all classes. Many thinkers considered that France might be the regenerator of Germany, though they were not blind to the fact that in France itself the outcome of the Great Revolution might be the gravest form of reactionary despotism. There was no patriotism in Germany at this time; but when it was discovered that the dominion of Napoleon meant, not liberty, but tyranny, the seeds of national sentiment, so long dormant, began to germinate.

Is it too much to think that Madame de Staël, when she threatened to parade through all countries the misery of an exile, and to preach a crusade against tyranny, was partly responsible for the change in German opinion? Is it incredible that in her many interviews with men of letters, such as Goethe, Schiller, and Schlegel; in her talks with politicians, like Gentz and Stein; her conversations with royalties, like the Queen of Prussia, the Duchess of Saxe-Weimar, the Russian Czar, she should have influenced foreign views of Napoleon? She knew every one; she had suffered greatly;

she was an effective enemy. It is hardly hazardous to assume that in her really triumphal procession through Germany, she helped the men of thought and the lovers of liberty and progress to realise what the conquest of that country by Napoleon would mean. Queen Louise imbibed hatred of the French Emperor from her; at her instigation Schlegel preached against France; in Berlin Madame de Staël herself announced that Napoleon was a man devoid of virtue and faith—a tyrant.

Affairs soon showed the correctness of her denunciation. The extortions made for the war-chest, the heavy levies of men, the paralysis of agriculture owing to the withdrawal of carts and horses for military use, the forced loans from the richer citizens, soon caused grave discontent in many parts of Germany, and in the summer of 1806 the steps taken by Napoleon to suppress the publication of hostile criticism on his authority and his army did more to arouse enthusiasm for liberty than either the defeat of Jena or the occupation of Berlin. The Emperor wrote instructions to Berthier as to the chastisement to be meted out to the six librarians, whom he meant to treat as scape-

goats for all the political pamphlets and poetic protests that were appearing at the time. "They shall be brought before a military commander and shot within twenty-four hours," ran the order. "It is no ordinary crime to spread libels in places where the French army is, in order to excite the inhabitants against it." Five of the men selected had their sentences commuted; the sixth, Palm, was shot three hours after his sentence had been passed. Such an event was indeed calculated to excite revenge in the hearts of the writers and philosophers of a country whose single outlet was at that time literature, for it struck a deathly blow at the only freedom left in Germany. The universities swore to avenge Palm of Nüremberg, and three years later his bleeding image was borne on the standard of the Hussars of Death, raised by the Duke of Brunswick d'Oels. It may be said without exaggeration that the death of Palm marked the turning of the tide of German feeling against Napoleon. Gentz, Madame de Staël's friend, wrote of the martyr in a pamphlet, "Germany in her profound abasement." Meanwhile in Spain the standard of liberty was being bravely upheld, and the

defence of Saragossa acted as a match to the train of sentiment in Germany. Palafox became, like Palm, a name of inspiration. Although Napoleon was deeply engaged in combating liberalism abroad, he did not forget his enemy at home, and when busy re-victualling his troops after Eylau, we find by his letters that he was still concerned with Madame de Staël and her machinations. In five months, ten letters were written to Fouché, urging him to be more thorough in his persecution of the lady. Every time the Emperor left Paris, there was a recrudescence of liberal thought, in causing which Madame de Staël had a considerable share. Various small annoyances reminiscent of her power seemed to haunt Napoleon. At Tilsit "Corinne," the new novel, was read and very much admired by the Prince de Neuchâtel (Berthier) and his family. It was a simple novel, as its authoress said, and had no political taint. "Bah!" said Napoleon; "de la politique! N'en fait-on pas de morale, de littérature?"

On the barge moored in the middle of Memel river further blows were dealt to the liberty of Europe, for there the Treaty of

Tilsit was signed. Napoleon was at last master of Germany.

Besides the treaty openly signed upon the barge, there were other private agreements made between the contracting parties with reference to England. It was the secret clauses in the Treaty of Tilsit that occasioned the bombardment of Copenhagen, which Byron and others who had no knowledge of these clauses thought a crime. The existence of secret articles planning the future destruction of England caused her to maintain her hostile attitude towards France.

During the vintage days of 1807, Madame de Staël entertained Prince Augustus of Prussia at Coppet. She found him distinguished in manner and charming in conversation; he was, moreover, patriotic and readily sympathetic with her views about Napoleon. Admiration for Madame de Staël and love for beautiful Madame Récamier, her guest, caused the prince to keep up an active correspondence with both ladies after he had left their neighbourhood. The French Emperor, owing to his splendid system of espionage, read the letters that passed between them, and thereby discovered that

Madame de Staël's influence was being exercised to convert the charming prince into a plotter against the existing situation in Prussia. He caused the suspect to be carefully observed, and in the winter received a report from the Governor of Berlin to the effect that Prince Augustus entertained seditious ideas, and was endeavouring to spread them amongst his compatriots. The "Journal de l'Empire," commenting on the affair and on the source of the prince's disloyal notions, said he had been at Coppet where "il faisait de la cour à Madame de Staël, et paraît avoir puisé dans cette dernière résidence de forts mauvais principes." The enmity of Madame de Staël was as untiring as the Emperor's vigilance, and it began to appear as though the one unconquerable thing in Europe was a woman.

The rest of the Continent appeared supine, and the princes and rulers of its conquered provinces were to all seeming demoralised; the Congress of Erfurt, which followed the Peace of Tilsit, was a mournful revelation of their attitude. They bowed their necks to the yoke and suffered themselves to be treated without honour. To us who come after, this

congress but proves the unimportance of the things that are seen, and the importance of the things that are not seen. The efforts of the liberators in Europe were having invisible but certain effects, and in 1809 the Archduke Charles gave vent to the suppressed sentiments of the nations, as he addressed the troops he was about to lead into battle against Napoleon, with these words : "The liberty of Europe has taken refuge beneath your standards; your victories will break the chains of your German brethren, who, though in the ranks of the alien, still await their deliverance."

With joy and expectation Madame de Staël and many other enthusiasts, like Stein, Fichte, Jahn, and Benjamin Constant, listened to the ominous rattling of the Napoleonic fetters in Europe. The prisoners seemed at last to have realised their desperate case ; the silence at last was broken. Madame de Staël's rôle became increasingly important, for the eyes of many a liberator turned to the shores of Lake Leman for encouragement and inspiration. Napoleon was acutely annoyed by her correspondence with Gentz, and by the knowledge of all the influential friends she had made and kept in

Germany. By his orders, she was watched even more closely at Coppet; her friends were considered as seditious persons, her very acquaintances became suspects. She said that it seemed as if Napoleon wished to imprison her in her own soul. To superintend the publication of her book on Germany, she moved to Chaumont-sur-Loire. Though the censors had passed the corrected proofs, Napoleon, on reading the book before publication, ordered its instant suppression and her immediate exile from France. Savary told her that it was destroyed "because it was not French;" and Goethe thought its destruction a prudent measure, from a French point of view, because it would have increased the confidence of Germans in themselves. The last three chapters in the book were those in which, in the name of enthusiasm, she eloquently protested against the spirit of the Empire. The book appealed too strongly to the passionate though sleeping love of liberty in Europe to make it anything but a firebrand. It was destroyed for its political tendency, but its merit lies in its being an impression of the world of thought in Germany in 1804.

Back again at Coppet "in the prison of the soul," she was visited by the devout and fascinating Madame de Krüdener and her fellow missionary Zacharias Werner, the Rosicrucian. Under their influence, she became extremely religious. Werner read "The History of Religion" by Stolberg with her, and when he left Coppet not only had Benjamin Constant come under his influence, but so also had William Schlegel: both contemplated writing religious works. Schlegel read Saint-Martin with deep attention. Madame de Staël plunged into the "Imitation of Jesus Christ." At the end of 1810, Coppet might have been the haven of a society of religious.

As her faith grew, she became calmer and almost thought that God, in sending her so many troubles, intended her to be a noble example to her age. In spite, however, of the consolation of religion, life became more and more difficult at Coppet. Madame de Staël was mortified at every turn. M. de Montmorency, on coming to spend two days with her, received at her house a nicely timed letter of exile in which it was indicated that his friendship with the authoress necessitated this

decree. The letter was delivered to him in her presence, and caused her such agony of mind that she drugged herself with opium. Madame Récamier, who in answer to repeated invitations was due to arrived at Coppet shortly after this event, was entreated by courier not to visit her would-be hostess, who was in terror lest the same fate should overtake her expected guest. Madame Récamier, nothing daunted by these warning messages, spent a few hours at Coppet, and then continued her journey. She was immediately exiled from Paris. M. de Saint Priest, an old friend of M. Necker, was exiled from Switzerland for holding intercourse with Madame de Staël. Nearly every post brought disquieting news about friends who had been exiled for their relations with her. In Switzerland every one, from Prefect to Customs Officer, treated her as suspect. Every one who came to Coppet was watched, letters were intercepted, conversations repeated. Life became intolerable, but in spite of this, and of a friend's warning to remember Mary Stuart's fate,—"nineteen years of misery and then a catastrophe," it was terribly difficult for her to abandon Coppet and all its memories. The idea of gaol

was horrible to her. Some one had told her that one of the bravest defenders of Saragossa lay in the dungeons at Vincennes so unnerved by solitude as to cry all the day long. Finally she decided to leave the much-loved inland sea, and tried to get a passage for America; this was denied her, as also was the permission to settle in Rome, but after various efforts she and M. Rocca, her husband, escaped to Innsbruck and travelled by way of Salzbourg to Vienna. Their adventures were numerous, and in Austria she just missed being arrested by French spies. Crossing the Russian frontier on the anniversary of the Fall of the Bastille—that symbol of tyranny—she registered a vow never again to set foot in a country subject in any way to the Emperor. Since the direct road to Petersburg was occupied by troops, the travellers went south to Odessa. During this long journey Madame de Staël consoled herself by planning a poem on Richard Cœur de Lion, and by the time she had reached Odessa her companions had to use persuasion to prevent her going on to Constantinople, Syria and Sicily, the scenes of his adventures. Russia held no beauty for her. The vast wheatfields, cultivated by

invisible hands, the sad birch-tree endlessly repeated by an uninventive nature, the rolling steppes, the absence of mountains to arrest the eye, the roadless wilderness, the isolated villages, all seemed to her unutterably monotonous and sad. She drove all day with fast horses, but the landscape made the journey seem like a nightmare in which, though always galloping forward, she never moved. The advance of the French armies haunted her. It was possible that even at the further end of Europe she might be placed in a ridiculous or a tragic position. Observing the quiet bearded faces of the peasantry and their religious demeanour, she feared that they were the very people to submit themselves with docility to the Napoleonic yoke. After weeks of driving, she saw the golden domes and painted cupolas of Moscow. It seemed to her more like a province than a town. Men were strenuously preparing for the inevitable war. Self-sacrifice and courage were to be met with at every turn, and Madame de Staël became an ardent admirer of the Russian nation. Count Rounov was raising a regiment at his own expense, and would only serve in it as a sub-lieutenant; Countess Orloff sacrificed part

of her income; peasants were enlisting with enthusiasm. Entering the Kremlin and climbing the tower of Ivan Veliki, she contemplated Moscow spread out like a map at her feet, and tried to count the minarets and domes of the city churches and of the great monasteries in the plain. How soon, she wondered, would Napoleon be standing in that very tower, monarch of all that she now surveyed. A month later Moscow was in flames. The retreat to the Beresina had begun.

At Petersburg she was received with homage. The Czar Alexander, who was the pupil of La Harpe, and so imbued with the idealistic view of the Revolution, welcomed her. Owing to the subjection of Europe, nearly all those persons who were the enemies of Napoleon, French émigrés, Spaniards, Swiss, and Germans like Arndt, Stein, and Dornberg, had gradually been drawn to Russia, and had taken refuge in its capital. Stein was delighted to hear fragments of "De l'Allemagne" read aloud by its authoress one night at the Orloff's. "She has saved a copy from the claws of Savary, and is going to have it printed in England," he wrote in a letter to his wife. An eager audience leaned

forward in order to lose no word of the last chapter on "enthusiasm." They found it intoxicating. She spoke as "the conscience of Europe," as "the representative of humanity." The Czar flattered her and treated her as "an English statesman would have done." He did not attempt to conceal his earlier admiration for Napoleon or his subsequent resentment at discovering himself to be his dupe. He deplored the immorality of the tyrant, and shared the view of Roumiantsof, his Chancellor, that it was Russia's celestial mission to deliver Europe. He had made up his mind that Bernadotte of Sweden was to initiate the defection of the German princes from French allegiance. That prince was deeply interested in his adopted country, and hated the notion that it should enter the Napoleonic confederacy. Just at the time the French were entering Smolensk he concluded a secret offensive and defensive alliance with Russia at Abo, though without pledging himself to immediate action. Since Madame de Staël had so much influence on Bernadotte, Alexander hoped that her approaching visit to Sweden would persuade him to seal his words by deeds. Travelling by way

of Finland, she deplored the dreariness of the scenery. Dull forests, composed of birch and fir, frowning mountains, granite rocks, "great bones of the earth," made her long for the gentler climates of southern Europe. At Abo she embarked on a "frail ship" for Stockholm, and Schlegel remarked on the terror she displayed at the prospect. Established in Sweden, she began to organise vast conspiracies. Her house became the home of all Napoleon's enemies, and the centre of an organised secret service with the European courts. Madame de Staël urged her friends to recall the exiled General Moreau from America to take command of the allied troops against Napoleon, and both the Czar and Bernadotte agreed with her that it would be well to secure him. Bernadotte was rather frightened by her activity; he did not like being rushed into extremes, and he could get neither money from England nor men from Russia to carry out any scheme. His fears caused him in a little while to send to St. Petersburg to try to undo the newly made treaty. Meanwhile, no stone was left unturned by Madame de Staël that might prove of use to the allies, and in February 1813 a small book

appeared at Hamburg, "Sur le Système continental, et sur ses rapports avec la Suède." It was a fierce pamphlet against Napoleon and his policy, and a direct invitation to Sweden to join Russia, and to England to deliver Europe from tyranny. "England," it said, "alone remained afloat, like the ark in the midst of the deluge." "The fate of Denmark was pitiable—could Sweden submit herself to such indignity?" "Happily, though, that was impossible, since Sweden had committed her destinies into the hands of the Prince Royal." Who was the anonymous author? The work bore a strange likeness to Madame de Staël's "Essay on Suicide," which appeared at Stockholm in 1812; some of the phrases used were almost identical. People wondered whether it was by her. Madame de Staël protested that Schlegel wrote it, and it was quickly reprinted with Schlegel's name attached to it. But every one felt convinced that she was the originator of the little book. Shortly afterwards she found another opportunity for pleading the cause of liberty by guiding the pen of Rocca in his "Memoirs of the War in Spain." With indefatigable enthusiasm did she seize all oppor-

tunities for educating public opinion against tyranny. When Bernadotte had been finally pushed into action and had left for Stralsund to command the North German troops, taking both Schlegel and Albert de Staël in his suite, Madame de Staël went to London in order to be a transmitter of news from the centre of all fresh intelligence.

To scheme and plot in public affairs was at the moment the occupation of every important political person in Europe. The Czar was endeavouring to force Metternich's hand, and to secure the friendship of Prussia. The French Emperor was engaged in trying to bribe Austria and Russia to allegiance. The Austrian Chancellor was watching for an advantage that might give his country a chance of becoming the arbiter of other nations' destinies. The intrigues and treaties that led up to the capitulation of Paris before the allies, the history of the diplomacy of the period, is immensely complicated, but at length a net capable of enmeshing the lion was constructed.

Napoleon realised his danger and tried to break the meshes woven by his would-be captors. He essayed to prevent Prussia from

concluding an alliance with Russia by offering to make Frederick William III. King of Poland, and to hinder Austria from allying herself with either Power by the tentative bribe of Illyria. In spite of his efforts, the nations negotiated among themselves and quietly drew up and signed agreements for concerted action, while expressing outwardly to Napoleon their satisfaction at the existing state of affairs. In March (1813) war was declared with the avowed object of freeing Germany and breaking up the Rheinbund. Many treaties were drawn up proposing different terms to France; but eventually it was decided to march on Paris, and demand the restoration of the Bourbon dynasty. The day of retribution had come.

When it was proved, by the proclamation of Louis XVIII., that a great tyranny was at last overthrown, a curious change came over Madame de Staël's spirit. She was at last free to return to Paris, but on landing at Calais she felt a pang of regret that her old enemy was beaten, her patriotic heart bled after ten years of exile to see Prussian uniforms on the landing pier, Cossacks at St. Denis, Austrians and English bivouacking about the Tuileries, and

Russian Guards on the steps of the Opera House. She hardly recognised her beloved city, and was in despair at this her horrible return. In spite of her cosmopolitanism she was not denationalised, and France was still the adored country of her soul. And yet it was the moment of her greatest triumph: "En Europe il faut compter trois puissances: l'Angleterre, la Russie, et Madame de Staël."* She did the honours of Paris; all worlds met at her house. Throughout her life, faithful to the idea of liberty, and only hating Napoleon in so far as he impersonated despotism, she commiserated him now that he was a prisoner. Knowing the weakness of the Restoration, the "Hundred Days" afforded her no surprise. Napoleon on his return from Elba said he knew "combien elle avait été généreuse pour lui pendant ses malheurs." He tried to ingratiate himself with her: "J'ai eu tort," he said to his brother Lucien; "Madame de Staël m'a fait plus d'ennemis dans son exil qu'elle ne m'en aurait fait en France." † He no longer ignored her extraordinary influence throughout

* Madame de Chastenay, "Mémoires," vol. ii. p. 445.

† P. Gautier, "Madame de Staël et Napoléon," p. 369.

Europe, nor the power of the friendships she enjoyed with the great of all countries; he meant her to be his ally in the future, and through Joseph Bonaparte tried to secure her friendship, and even interested himself in Mademoiselle de Staël's marriage prospects, as a means to this end. Joseph wrote to Madame de Staël in April 1815:

"La France est aujourd'hui une avec l'Empereur; il veut donner plus de liberté que vous n'en voudrez . . . *vos* sentiments, *vos* opinions peuvent aujourd'hui se manifester librement, elles sont celles de toute la nation, et je me trompe fort si l'Empereur ne devient pas dans cette nouvelle phase de sa vie plus grand qu'il ne l'a été."

He went so far as to tell her that he had overheard Napoleon saying that there was no word in "De l'Allemagne" to which objection could be taken!

All the friends of liberty in France had imagined that Napoleon would return from Elba in the same mind as that in which he went away. His new proclamations astonished them. There was to be no vengeance of any

kind. Benjamin Constant was summoned by the returned Emperor to discuss liberal ideas with him. It was possible to doubt sentiments, but not acts. The promise of public discussion, of responsible ministers, of the liberty of the press, and of free elections secured even Lafayette's allegiance. Waterloo followed too soon upon this profession for any man to tell what Napoleon would have accomplished with his new policy. The contest that had lasted for fifteen years was over. Napoleon went to his island grave, and Madame de Staël survived his disappearance but two years.

It must be confessed that Madame de Staël and the party to which she belonged judged the condition and situation of France in 1799 less well than Bonaparte. They believed in democracy as the panacea for all ills, and in the immediate possibilities of the people. If cynicism consists in seeing things as they actually are and not as they might be, Napoleon was a cynic who, to reduce a turbulent and uneducated mob to order, allowed his policy to justify the worst fears of reasonable as well as sentimental liberalism. He lacked the understanding of the soul of peoples.

Unlike Madame de Staël, who made it her profession to discern that soul, he recognised no important factor in nationality and made the error in his calculations of reducing all men to a common denominator of stupidity or wickedness. He had a profound contempt for that which constitutes the real wealth of human nature, generosity, enthusiasm, idealism, altruism, and regarded the subjects of such delusions as victims fit for trickery or tyranny. In Madame de Staël he was forced at length to acknowledge a soul made inconquerable by love of liberty and to recognise the strength and permanence of an idealism he contemned.

Napoleon, as it were, summed up in himself the old inflexible ideals of military government. He might well be called the last of the Romans. His calm imperial brow bears the ever-green wreath of fame, but it is the fame of an older day, and though it is but a hundred years since he dominated Europe, he ranks with the classic conquerors of antiquity, and not among the passionate experimenters of the modern world. Madame de Staël belongs to another category and may be counted among the prophets. She believed in the future of the people; she

believed that acts might one day be co-extensive with ideals; and in accord with these beliefs she spoke and lived. In the long duel she was the victor, for the principles she upheld triumphed. She clung to her beliefs in liberty, and held that personal dignity springing out of individual freedom is necessary to man if he to be neither a savage nor a slave, and that the independence of the soul founds the independence of States. These convictions she confessed for many dangerous years in all ardour and sincerity, and every day justifies her protest, for moral and human considerations affect the public conscience ever more and more acutely, and have become since her day a present and integral part of all politics. Madame de Staël's lonely cry has been echoed by thousands. Napoleon was dethroned by the revolt against the old conceptions of government which he embodied no less than by the cannon of Leipzig and Waterloo.

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